

METTERNICH: EXPONENT OF STABILITY

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

Strobl wrote at the beginning of his life of Metternich:

"Three great men left the impress of their personalities on European political development during the nineteenth century. These men were Napoleon, Metternich and Bismarck. Their efforts gave place¹ in turn to French, Austrian, and finally German supremacy."

It seems proper to begin the study of Metternich's part in the resettlements of Europe with a consideration of the importance which may be assigned to "the impress" of his personality. Metternich once wrote of Bonaparte, that he was not so great in person as he appeared to be; that he was the natural product of the age; that he moved "like a meteor above the mists of a general dissolution," with "nothing around him but the debris of a social condition ruined by the excess of false civilization"; that his ambitions were opposed only by "universal lassitude, feeble rivalries, ignoble passions, adversaries² everywhere disunited and paralysed by their disagreements."

Metternich thus endeavored to express a feeling that Napoleon's ascendancy was of more import than the mere rising to power of a great soldier. Today, when the brilliant light of that soldier's personality is diffused, somewhat, if not dimmed, it seems evident that Napoleon was the incarnation of his country's need. The complete demonstration of the Rights of Man to assert his God-given powers, he was the embodiment of the new exaltation which had seized hold of the French masses. He dug a spring at which the old thirst for glory might be quenched, and he brought the nation safely out of chaos.

Metternich was neither soldier nor emperor, he does not shine forth in the dimness of the past, as did the heroes of Carlyle; but he succeeded Napoleon as the dominant European. His rise to power, like that of Napoleon's was the result of great need. He was demanded to revive the weakening Empire of Austria, and by the same need to bring peace and equilibrium to Europe. The recognition of his fitness for the role came earliest from a Frenchman, Baron de Vitrolles, who arrived at Allied headquarters in the early spring of 1814 to plead the cause of the Bourbons.

"The qualities of his character and of his mind, the very limits of his genius, were in the main those which suited best the immutable principles of that old Austrian empire - conservative, patient, temporizing but always persistent. This conformity of the character of the one who governs with the political principle of the State, is an essential condition of success. Under such auspices, the genius of the man identifies itself effortlessly, with the country and the circumstances, and becomes naturally the official expression of the public will. This marvellous accord explains sufficiently the long and imperturbable political career which has made Prince Metternich the foremost among the statesmen of his age."³

Though the downfall of Napoleon was accomplished in the interest of stability, Metternich was in no sense the enemy of France, nor of the Emperor of France. He was the enemy of French preponderance, as he was the enemy of preponderance on the part of any nation. As soon as Napoleon had been forced back beyond the Rhine, Metternich was ready for peace. When he consented to cross the Rhine, he did so because he felt that a desirable peace could never be obtained from Napoleon until extorted by arms. He agreed to the overthrow of

Napoleon only when finally convinced that no peace could be permanent while he was Emperor of France. As an Austrian, Metternich desired a stable peace based on general equilibrium. As a European, he desired such a peace, and fought for it on issues which did not concern Austria herself.

Napoleon refused to limit his ambitions to the ambitions of his nation and to become "King of France", as Talleyrand advised. The god of utility toppled him from his pinnacle. Metternich dominated Europe after that fall because he was the incarnation of the necessity of his age. As soon as the need was met, and supplanted by another, the Austrian minister was sent hurtling after Napoleon.

For a time, however, the need of stability and equilibrium was most pressing. The land of the Hapsburgs was a variegated pattern of nationalities and principalities. A common allegiance to the Imperial Crown bound the whole together, but the power of the Crown was, in turn, limited by the ancient privileges and constitutions of the parts. In the main these parts had been brought to the dynasty by heredity, contracts of marriage, or "voluntary submission with reservation of individual rights."⁴ Joseph II attempted to Germanize and centralize the empire. He failed because, as Metternich said, he "injured the national feelings and the constitutions of the country."⁵ To hold this congeries together, two conditions must exist: a common interest in union; a peaceful balance among the integral states.

The diplomats of the ancient regime looked upon Austria as a political and geographical necessity. It bound together the heterogeneity of central Europe and furnished the decisive weight in the balance of power between France, Prussia, Russia and Turkey.

Lord Liverpool had not lost that conception in 1815. Today in a continent made over at Versailles, there is yet to be found a suitable Central European substitute for the Hapsburg Empire.

During the quarter century which marked the rise and fall of Napoleon, Austria was the crossroads for the armies of Europe. War and famine drained the life blood from the land. Metternich rose to power in the midst of this degradation because he was cognizant of Austria's need; most of all because his own political character was analogous to the political character which the Empire must assume in regaining its rightful rank in Europe. He dominated Europe only as long as Europe's need was Austria's need. But his statesmanship was broader than a mere nationalistic policy.

To look back upon the past, one must perforce gaze through the many-paned window of the present. The vista of the years from 1789 to 1815, as well as those which immediately followed, has been sadly distorted by the inadequacy of human powers to piece together the pattern from divers glimpses of that time. Liberty, equality, nationality, legitimacy, reaction, - have been pointed to as being the principal motivations of men's actions in that era. But care must be taken lest modern conceptions of such ideas, intermingle themselves with the conceptions current at the opening of the nineteenth century.

Metternich has been cursed as the chief opponent of liberty, of nationality, in fact, of all the priceless boons which noble men clasp to their bosoms. It has been the fashion to picture him as hating the revolution from early boyhood; growing to manhood in the midst of a decaying empire, to become the Nemesis of Napoleon, and the leader of reaction. This legend began with the radicals who found

Metternich too conservative, and the thirsters after conquest who thought him over-fond of peace. It may be laid largely at Metternich's own literary doorstep - to the Memoirs which he left to posterity.

These Memoirs, published posthumously in 1881, hindered the swinging back to the truth, which had already begun among historians. The letters and documents were preceded by a long narrative in which Metternich sketched his youth, his rise in the diplomatic service, and the events of 1813-1814. He wrote this account in 1829, when the exigencies of keeping peace in Europe had made him a true reactionary. Regarding himself then as having been chiefly responsible for the downfall of Napoleon, he set about telling the story of his early life and so wrote into it the convictions of later years. "I felt," he said, "that the Revolution would be the adversary I should have to fight." ⁶ He even dramatized his entrance at the University of Strasburg. "The year I went there, the youthful Napoleon Bonaparte had just left....We had the same professors for mathematics and fencing." ⁷ Alas for the Metternichian legends derived from this oft quoted statement, for the tale is a pure invention. Napoleon never studied at Strasburg, nor even visited there till long after ⁸ 1788. Then to show himself triumphantly steadfast in the face of all the blandishments of innovation, Metternich represented his tutor at Strasburg as being a disciple of the Revolution, who served on the "abhorred tribunal" in that city; who shared in the responsibility for the "streams of blood-shed in Alsace, and later in Paris, "presided over the Council of 10", ⁹ which conducted the horrors of the tenth of August. As a matter of fact Simon was a poor professor who had published in succession two

inoffensive newspapers. He was not president of the "Council of 10", an organization which never existed, but served in Paris¹⁰ in a very minor and very harmless capacity.

Worse than such erroneous dramatizing - for the biographer at least - was the manner in which Metternich pictured himself as a kind of political automaton. He, whose charm gave him sway over friends, and helped so often to disarm enemies, was represented as a veritable Sphinx. "This personation," says Strobl, "knows neither love, nor hate, nor joy, nor pain, nor violence... The once mighty chancellor shows himself a dull pendant who was never young. He would us think that the greater part of his momentous life existed only for the bundles of documents which are preserved in the various¹¹ archives of the continent."

Metternich seems to have been inclined to fancy himself in this role. In the summer of 1813, after he had brought Austria so triumphantly through the perils resulting from war on all sides; after he had braved Napoleon at Dresden in a heated conversation of eight hours' duration; his outward attitude changed considerably. F. J. Jackson, who had known him some eight years before in Berlin, wrote to George Jackson, then at headquarters, that Metternich's demeanor must have taken a new turn. Remembering the gay young man he had known in Berlin, he could not picture the person whom his¹² brother met in 1813. But this austerity was only an attitude, Metternich still had a strong vein of frivolity in his make-up.

Only in recent years, have researches by German scholars brought to light the real nature of Metternich's political beliefs prior to 1815. Even with the increase in sources, much of significance

has been overshadowed by the emphasis placed on his part in German unification. Srbik, the latest and most authentic biographer, has succeeded largely in transcending the old crumbling barriers which tradition had set around the life of the greatest of Austrian diplomats.¹³

As a youth, Metternich was like all the young men of those troubled times - dominated intellectually by the writing of Voltaire, Rousseau, and the Encyclopedists; quickened mentally by the great movements which were shaking Europe. As a man, he neither ignored the forces of the time nor championed them. He was a conservative, a sane and reasonable person. His domestic policy in Austria had a decided liberal bent; but he dreaded liberalism decked out in the blood-stained clothes of revolution. He appreciated the force of nationality in the overthrow of Napoleon; but he saw nationality also as a species of frenzy, as a militaristic crusade, as the spiritualization of war between peoples. He refused to see nobility in the nationality of Stein and Blucher, which expressed its love for Germany and Prussia, in a desire to raze Paris to the ground, and tear France asunder.

Today, nationality is a political byword, and the "self determination of peoples", a platitude. Liberalism and democracy have become more than respectable. But to a reasonable man, the first part of the nineteenth century offered ample basis for doubting them. The truth is, that even among educated liberals, there was little doctrinaire belief in such abstractions. But the "reasonable" men of yesterday are today made the betes noires of human progress, when the causes which they doubted have been accepted.

Metternich's policy was based quite evidently upon the necessity of his age. Equilibrium, order, stability, - those formed the

keystone around which he proposed to erect the European structure, and by so doing secure for Austria the place which it had once held in that structure. All that he sought in the governments around him, was an appreciation of the necessity of bringing a stable peace to Europe. He cared nothing for the origins or forms of those governments. Talleyrand complained at the Congress of Vienna, that Metternich appeared not to esteem the principle of legitimacy.¹⁴

Care must be exercised, to keep in mind the need which was then uppermost in Europe, not nationality, nor liberty, nor legitimacy, but peace and stability. If the passion for stability swept Metternich too near the cataracts of intolerance, at least he did not flounder into the deep waters of political extravagance where his enemies not only drowned themselves but dragged down with them the aspirations of many peoples. From his entrance into political life in 1801 to Napoleon's second and final banishment, the course of his political thought and action was unswerving, and in its essentials, unchanged.

CHAPTER II.

THE MAN AND HIS COUNTRY

Clemens Lothar Metternich was born in Coblenz on May 15, 1773. His father represented the ecclesiastical court of Treves at Vienna and the court of Vienna at Coblenz - one position with two salaries. Later, through the influence of Kaunitz, he rose to higher ranks in the service of the Austrian Empire; but during the early youth of Clemens, the elder Metternich was only one of the ¹ great number of petty diplomats in the Holy Roman Empire. He seems to have had little ability, and less ambition; he was never free from financial stress. But "powdered and painted, in highly artistic perruque, silk-stockings, and knee breeches, he fulfilled his duty as a diplomat, conscientiously as the easy going eighteenth century presented it." ² From his father, Metternich seems to have inherited his native indolence (which he shook off in early manhood, but which returned in later years), his love of the fleshpots, and ³ his inclination for the ladies.

"Far richer," says Srbik, "was the natural inheritance for which he could thank his mother To her, he owed extraordinary flexibility of mind, the gift of political refinement, unusual powers of reception and adaptation, and the driving force with which he fought for the possession of honor and fame. Her, he could thank, for a warm heart; for the quickly inflamed and quickly quenched ardor of his youthful politics; for loveableness of manner and sociability; for an extremely attractive physiognomy; for a beautiful

eye and a symmetry of figure which opened the way into the hearts
 of so many women."⁴

Such were Metternich's parents. From them he received the personal charm which served him so well throughout life. From them came, too, a certain mediocrity which was at once his strength and weakness. It made him essentially an average man; a practical man; but a man lacking in a measure the vision which distinguishes greatness.

Though what Vitrolles called "the limits" of Metternich's "genius", may have been set to an extent by heredity, in no less degree did the environment of early life fashion his character. He grew up far from the beau monde in a little Rhenish court, typical of the many which dotted the Germanies. As a child, he journeyed to Strassburg to be vaccinated against small-pox, and later went there for his education; but when, at the age of seventeen he witnessed the coronation of Leopold at Frankfort, he had never set foot in Austria.⁵

Born a Rhinelander, he never forgot the scenes of his youth. In old age, after his exile in London had ended, and he had again found a home in Vienna (1857), for the last time he visited the land of his birth. "He lingered on the Rhenish heights," says Srbik, "letting his gaze wander from Bingen to Nahetal, and memories of the old vintage festivals came back to him; as did the realization of what the Rhine meant to the German Volk - a realization which has always been foreign to the comprehension of the German national state... He wrote to his sister: 'The Rhine flows in my veins, I feel it, and
 therefore the sight of it, intoxicates me.'"⁶

Metternich had none of the national fervor so common to the men of his age. His family cherished no "genuine love for fatherland and pride in empire," as did the forbears of Stein.⁷ The Rhenish family was, in psychology, actually more French than German. Clemens wrote to his mother in French, and at the age of eighteen, preferred that language.⁸ He grew up a veritable cosmopolite. It was, perhaps, this very circumstance which later made it possible for Metternich to regard the reorganization of Europe in the sense of "weltanschauung", and so enabled him to resurrect Austria and elevate himself.

At Coblenz, he contemplated the slack absolutism of the petty German courts, and the absurd fiction of the Holy Roman Empire which bound them together. He learned to appreciate the value of law and authority. Later, when he governed the policies of the Austrian Empire, he was firmly resolved that Austria should not continue as the nominal head of the innumerable German principalities. He cared nothing for the fiction of authority where no authority existed.

From the quiet surroundings of his youth, Metternich went in 1788 to the University of Strasburg. Here he was in direct contact with French thought of the eighteenth century. The young Rhinelanders warmed himself at the intellectual fires of Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Rousseau, studied natural history, political history, physics, and even learned to play on the violin.⁹ Koch was conducting his famous school of diplomacy at Strasburg, and Metternich became one of his pupils. Talleyrand and Benjamin Constant had been trained by the same master.¹⁰ Under Putter, who taught "the existing right and its application, and the observance of the laws", Metternich¹¹ studied political science.

He was a sensitive lad, with beliefs essentially like those of the youths of his acquaintance. Reason and humanity were the keynotes of his education. His religious training had been at best. luke warm, and at Strasburg he seems to have fallen into the scepticism of the times. The writer, Varnhagen, who met him during this period, characterized him as a free-thinker.¹² In general, it might be said, that he was a very normal boy. Metternich's stay at Strasburg was ended in 1790, when his father summoned him to the coronation of the Emperor Leopold.¹³

The elder Metternich, in the service of the Holy Roman Empire, had been made imperial representative of circle of the Lower Rhine and Westphalia. Now, through the favor of Chancellor Kaunitz, he was appointed chief minister in the Netherlands for the Austrian Empire. During the next two years (1791-93), young Metternich continued his studies at Mayence and passed his summers at Brussels,¹⁴ where he had first acquaintance with the details of diplomacy.

In the Netherlands he associated with the French emigres, and learned as he said "to know the defects of the old regime."¹⁵ Through the winter months, he studied law and diplomacy at Mayence; associated with Hofman, Forster, Kotzebue - all Revolutionists; and read the record of the past under the eye of Nicholas Vogt, the historian of the German Empire.¹⁶ He seems to have had much to do with, if not much in common with the more revolutionary elements in and around the university. But in his 1829 memoir, he chose to represent himself as having held aloof from such society - a difficult task if as he says, he was "surrounded by students who named the lectures according to the Republican calendar."¹⁷ As a matter of fact, the decree of the Convention which established this calendar was

not promulgated until October 5; 1793, while Metternich left Mayence early in 1793, called away by the overthrow of his father's¹⁸ government in the Netherlands. However, the convention troops did occupy the city in the Fall of 1792. The revolt of Mayence was the direct provocation for the propaganda decree of November of that¹⁹ year. Metternich was amply exposed to the germs of the Revolution.

Metternich's academic training came to an end in 1793 with his departure for Mayence. During the next year, he acted as courier between Brussels and the army, and continued his diplomatic apprenticeship. In the spring of 1794 he journeyed to England, where he met the great men of the island and frequented the sittings²⁰ of Parliament. In later years, his knowledge of the English system made possible a closer understanding with the British minister, when the reorganization of Europe demanded agreement between Austria and Great Britain. While in England, Metternich was appointed Austrian ambassador to the Hague, a decided social elevation for the young²¹ Rhenish count, if not a very important advancement politically.

He returned to the continent that summer, and in October, for²² the first time, entered the capitol of the Austrian Empire. Prince Kaunitz, patron of the elder Metternich was now dead and Baron Thugut had succeeded to authority. There had been some indiscretions in the administration of the Netherlands, and the elder Metternich's abilities were not reckoned too highly by the new minister of²³ foreign affairs. The father of the future chancellor was left high and dry. To add to his misfortunes, the family estates on the²⁴ left bank of the Rhine had been confiscated by the French.

A remedy for all these embarrassments was found in a brilliant marriage for his son. The choice fell upon the granddaughter of

Prince Kaunitz, an amiable young woman with considerable fortune and no particular beauty. Clemens Lothar accepted the arrangement. Love seems not to have entered into the betrothal. Many years after, Metternich told a friend that he had been married - not against his will, but without it.

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The marriage, celebrated in September of the year 1795, profoundly influenced the career of the young diplomat. The financial independence which came as a result, might easily have enhanced his inclination for study and for the indolence of private life; but Clemens had married an ambitious woman. The granddaughter of one political celebrity, she intended to be the wife of another. For the time being, however, the young husband continued his studies, contented to await the beck of fortune. He was, and always had been, a patient, unassuming person with no particular evidences of brilliance. His chief distinction lay in charm of manner and bearing which made him much sought after in society.

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Meanwhile the Metternich family remained outside Thugut's favored circle. To the Congress of Rastadt, both Clemens and his father did go, but one, simply as the representative of the Westphalian assembly of knights, the other, as minister from the German Reich. Neither gained much profit or reputation from the proceedings there. Kotzebue, also a witness of the Congress, was thought to have written his "Die beiden Klingsberg" from observation of the Metternichs - the lover with the "grey locks tousled by the zephyrs," who could "never be weaned from his youth"; and his son, the young sport running after every skirt and continually in the way of his father's amorous ambitions.

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The ladies were destined to play an ever increasing part in the

life of the younger diplomat. He had begun his love affairs at Mayence and Brussels, and he was to continue them in most of the capitols of Europe. "At every stage in his brilliant career," says Paleologue, "may be seen the shining image of a woman."²⁸

The failure of the Rastadt Congress left the elder Metternich stranded once more. The family political future seemed very dark indeed. But the treaty of Luneville brought, as a consequence, a change of ministry. Baron Thugut was suspected of being over solicitous of the private investments which he had made in France.²⁹ The change brought new hope to the elder Metternich, and to the wife of the younger Metternich though Clemens Lothar, himself, can hardly have been enthusiastic. Nevertheless, in 1801, he entered difinitely upon a diplomatic career.

Austria by this time had already suffered defeat at Rivoli, Merengo, and Hohenlinden, and had been humiliated by the treaties of Campo-Formio (1797) and Luneville (1801). Furthermore, before Metternich's elevation to the head of foreign affairs in 1809, the sable-hued double eagle was to be lowered successively at Ulm, Austerlitz, Wagram. The diplomats of the Empire were to bend beneath necessity, and sign the treaties of Presburg (1805), Fontainbleau (1807), and Vienna (1809).

Beginning in 1801, Metternich served as minister at Dresden until 1803, then at Berlin until 1805, and at Paris from 1806 to 1809; learning by these stages the politics of the princes of the Empire, of Prussia, and of France. His Paris service was an accident of fate. He was in 1806 chosen as Stadion's successor at St. Petersburg, but Napoleon knowing his reputation for "agreeableness", asked for his

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appointment at the French court. At Berlin, Metternich arranged the Potsdam alliance agreement of December 4, 1805. At Paris, he negotiated the Treaty of Fontainebleau of October 11, 1807, which defined the boundary between Austria and Italy. In 1809, holding temporarily the portfolio which Stadion had resigned, he participated in the Altenberg negotiations after Wagram. Such is the bare record of his ambassadorial career.

When Metternich was given permanent possession of the portfolio of minister of foreign affairs, his policy was already formed. The course had long been known to him. From the beginning, are to be found in his writings, a conception of Europe as a whole, and of Austria's dependence upon the proper arrangement of that Europe. Most pertinent to this study may be considered the early expressions of his political thoughts.

In 1801, in drawing up his own instructions as representative at the Court of Dresden, Metternich took occasion to discuss the condition of Europe in general. 31 It was impossible then, he said, to create a "settled European state-system." To restore Europe, Prussia's militaristic ambitions must be curtailed; Russia's land hunger abated; Poland restored if possible; the acquisitions of France modified; England's immense maritime possessions retroceded in part. Austria must define and unify itself. It were better, he said, to be rid of the Netherlands forever. In this expression are to be found the cardinal points of his policy in the years 1813-14.

He was only too conscious that Austria could not bring Europe to stability by her own efforts. Since French preponderance was the present danger, he felt keenly the need of alliance with Prussia

and Russia. In 1804, he urged Prussia to help gain an "equilibrium of Europe." which would insure "the independence, tranquillity, and safety" of all states.³² Metternich was essentially a practical man. After the disasters of December, 1805, and the Peace of Presburg, he drew up immediately (January, 1806) a memoir upon the exigencies of the situation. For the moment, he easily gave up his ideal scheme and advised Austria, Russia, and Prussia - united by alliance - to draw a line of demarcation between Eastern and Western Europe. Ignore Napoleon, he said; let him tear down kingdoms and set up empires and satrapies to his heart's content, so long as he confines himself to Western Europe.³³ But in the spring he had given up that hope for the Franco-Prussian alliance had come to his knowledge. Prussia can no longer be depended upon, he said. She is lost to "the general cause."³⁴

Then came Jena. As ambassador at Paris, he saw Russia succumb to the blandishments of the wily Corsican at Tilsit. Writing to his superior, he detailed the gossip of the Parisians in the cafes; the vision of two great empires, Russian and French, with Austria divided between them. Tilsit made the Austrian position more precarious, but Metternich was comforted that, at least the monarchy was intact. He foresaw a time when the hastily fashioned structure of this Europe would fall. "The wisdom of our government", he wrote, "should bring about a day when 300,000 men united, ruled by one will, and directed towards one end, will play the first part in Europe at a time of universal anarchy."³⁵ Did he perhaps think of himself as that "one will"?

After the treaty of Fontainebleau of 1807, the boundary line

between Austria and Italy was definitely settled, and Metternich hoped for peace. "We find ourselves for the first time in a situation clearly defined and understood by France; no question is left open."³⁶ But Napoleon was not long in dispelling hopes of peace. Already, he had made himself master of Germany and Italy, had trampled Prussia underfoot and cajoled Russia into an alliance. Now he proposed to conquer the Spanish throne for his brother, and partition Turkey.³⁷ He talked to Metternich about dividing the possessions of the Porte, but the Austrian minister refused to consider taking any share in such action. He wrote home to Stadion that the next move would be against the Empire of the Hapsburgs. "The ancient and venerable union of so many happy peoples... will not sustain the first shock," he said.³⁸

Austria began to prepare against the time when Napoleon's troops, having gained the day in Spain, would come marching back over the Pyrenees. Napoleon was aware of the armaments in the neighboring Empire and protested against them to Metternich. In September of 1808, he journeyed to Erfurt to meet Alexander. There, Russia agreed to recognize the new Kings of Spain and Naples, and secretly promised to join with France if Austria should be the first to open war. The difficulties of the Spanish campaign forbade Napoleon's thinking of immediate war with the Emperor Francis. He began, in February 1809, to discuss a treaty of mutual guarantee between France, Russia, and Austria.⁴⁰

War broke out, however, in April, and Napoleon quickly proved his military supremacy. But he found before him a sturdy foe. The Tyrolese peasants fought valiantly, Hungary refused to declare its independence despite the French war manifesto of April 25, inviting such action.⁴¹ All the Austrian peoples were quickened to life by the

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unifying spirit of the new national militia. Napoleon himself was impressed by the resistance of these forces. Later when his minister of war spoke of Austria as no longer being a great power, the French Emperor said, "Then it is clear that you were not at Wagram." ⁴³ He marvelled at the enthusiasm with which the people greeted the Austrian sovereign on his return, despite defeat and an unfavorable peace. ⁴⁴ The significance of this new feeling in Austria, for the career and views of Metternich, must not be overlooked.

"It is well to remember," says Herbert Fisher, "that Metternich's political barque was first launched on the tide of a popular and national movement." ⁴⁵ In truth, the young Austrian had long been conscious of the potential force of this tide. He was by no means anti-national, but he was strongly set against revolution with all its attendant horrors. Especially was he opposed to the political cast given by the succeeding revolutionary governments of France to what he considered a distinctly social upheaval. His distrust of the "passions of the people" was a thing of gradual development, however. For example, in 1829 he wrote as if he had always been averse to popular appeal. ⁴⁶ But at twenty-one, he advocated a species of "guerilla" protection against the borders of France, and wrote a paper "On the Necessity of a general Arming of the People, on the Frontiers of France, by a Friend of Universal Peace." ⁴⁷ Again, in 1805, he wished his government to compete with Napoleon in appealing to Public Opinion and advised the establishment of a newspaper of popular appeal. ⁴⁸ During the war in Spain, he constantly applauded the national spirit which fired the Spanish peasants to brave Napoleon's veteran legions. In short to picture Metternich as unaware or

unappreciative of the greatest and newest force of the time, would be to make him a man of no vision whatever, a veritable dolt. Certainly, he was neither.

At the battle of Wagram, July 5, 6, Austria was badly defeated but by no means crushed. In the interim which followed the cessation of hostilities, the Emperor Francis was hoping against hope for assistance from Prussia or Russia, from England's expedition into Holland, even from Turkey. But none was forthcoming. There was no sane alternative but peace. Considerable mystery surrounds the negotiation. Stadion withdrew and Metternich took his place at Altenberg, where the first meetings with French plenipotentiaries were held; while Prince John of Liechtenstein negotiated separately with Napoleon himself at Schonbrunn. The treaty seems to have been concluded there. Austria was compelled to sign away over 2000 square miles of territory.⁴⁹ Metternich thus came into the ministry of foreign affairs in the train of the worst of all the humiliations which the Empire had experienced from Napoleon.

The new minister was just thirty-six years old. Although he had been ambassador to Prussia at thirty and to France at thirty-three, he was not thought of as a great man. Gantz said that he could be considered only a "demi-ministre," and even accused him of scheming to overthrow Stadion.⁵⁰ Six months later, he was still dubious though forced to admit grudgingly that the direction of foreign affairs by Metternich was not "absolutely bad." "He believes himself happy; that is an excellent quality. He has his methods, he has savoir-faire; his personality is a great asset. But he is frivolous, dissipated and presumptuous. If his star shines for a few years he can obtain

for the State a very adequate position. But beware of new crises.
 They will tumble him down."⁵¹

While negotiations were going on in the fall of 1809, Napoleon had written to the Emperor Francis: "If peace is established between us, it will then depend on Your Majesty to make the bonds between our States even closer."⁵² This advice was to be answered within six months by the marriage of Marie-Louise to the Emperor of France. In 1829, Metternich represented this marriage as having been arranged at the solicitation of Napoleon.⁵³ But there is good reason to believe that Metternich's insinuations offered an opening. In 1810 he boasted to Gentz of his wisdom in thus uniting the two Empires.⁵⁴ At Basle in January 1814, he told Castlereagh that Marie-Louise had been given in marriage to Napoleon, to prevent a rapprochement between Russia and France.⁵⁵ At least, both parties were agreeable and the marriage was celebrated in March 1810. Viennese society was horrified. The Prince de Ligne appeared in the salons with a bon mot, as usual:
 "L'Autriche fit au Minotaure le sacrifice d'une belle genisse."⁵⁶

The new minister, however, felt that the marriage had brought Austria the golden gift of peace, temporary though its possession might be. He planned to make good use of it. "The chief efforts of the Government," he advised the Emperor, "must have for their aim the regulation and restoration of vigour to our internal energies, and the accumulation of these energies for all possible emergencies in the future."⁵⁷ With this goal in view, he reorganized the foreign offices; set about redrafting the Hungarian Constitution; and in the face of strenuous opposition launched wide financial reforms throughout the Empire. The organization of an Imperial Council was recommended to

Francis as a means of unifying the administration, and giving the different parts of the Empire a greater share in the government.

Although busy with internal reforms, Metternich had not forgotten his idea of a "general" peace of Europe. While negotiating a loan in Paris during the summer of 1810, he offered to Napoleon, the Austrian mediation of a maritime peace with England. His offer was turned aside, but he nevertheless set Gentz to writing a memoir on a maritime arrangement.⁵⁸ For all his hopes for peace, when he returned to Vienna in October, 1810, he saw that a fresh war on the continent between France and Russia was inevitable. In a long report to Francis of January 17, 1811, he outlined the results of his Paris mission and reviewed the prospect of European affairs.⁵⁹

The people of France, he said, were far from happy under the burdens which Napoleon's conquests forced them to bear. However, the appearance of what seemed to be a "calm after prolonged storms" gave them comparative contentment. No revolution would take place in old France. The question of whether or not the provinces would revolt, depended upon the sentiment of unity against French aggression That at present seemed to be lacking. England was in critical condition; Prussia, no longer to be reckoned as a Power. Russia had placed herself beside France, and by so doing "rendered herself dangerous to all her neighbours and powerless against France." The marriage of Napoleon with the daughter of the Austrian Emperor had robbed Alexander of the advantage which he found in alliance with France. War was inevitable. Could Austria prevent it? No, he answered. Despite the threatened destruction of Russia, Austria could not side with that power under present circumstances. To make war against France,

or with her, seemed out of the question. The important detail of the moment was Galicia. If Napoleon set up a Kingdom of Poland as he planned, Galicia would soon be lost. France had offered Illyria as compensation for Galicia. Perhaps it would be better to accept. Austria would favor the reestablishment of Poland, except for hesitancy to lose Galicia.

Thus, Metternich summed up the problem. It should be noted well that in Austrian eyes, Russia loomed as a dangerous enemy, as dangerous as France. Both of them, Metternich reported to Francis in November, 1811, were "Powers equally to be feared by all others whether they are allies or enemies." In truth, Russia at present was perhaps the most to be feared, since the marriage of Marie Louise would hold France off for a time. Russia, he showed, had turned covetous eyes on Austria's western frontier since the reign of Peter the Great. She had supported Prussia when that country was a menace to Austria. She had destroyed Poland, "and with this kingdom all idea of true European policy; established in its stead a system of destruction and robbery." If Austria had not resisted, Russia would have crushed Turkey. The downfall of the German Empire dated from the beginning of Russian intrigues within it. Worse, she had twice abandoned her allies to their fate when she had seen her own frontiers threatened. Stability in Europe could be attained only by curtailing Russia's ambitions, just as those of France must be limited.

It is well to remember this feeling, in the light of Metternich's later attitude toward Russia; an attitude which the English minister, Castlereagh found it difficult at times to understand.

With the opening of the year 1812, Napoleon was ready for war against the Czar. In February, he bound Prussia to help him, and in

March succeeded in arranging a defensive alliance with Austria by which that power reluctantly agreed to furnish an auxiliary corps of 60,000 men. Society in Vienna made no secret of its distaste for this alliance. Napoleon, as Baron Ernouf has pointed out in his life of Maret, had counted too much upon the personal sentiments of the Emperor of Austria for his daughter. Because of the dealings with France, the ministry of Metternich was popularly regarded with small favor. The force of public opinion in the Empire was not to be disregarded, though the government had been pro-French.⁶¹ Metternich was far from being that, but he was something else - a very patient man.

The attitude of Austria under the treaty was but lightly veiled. The auxiliary corps played a waiting game to which Ernouf attributed a "fatal influence" on the events of 1812. He said, ironically enough, that "Prince Schwarzenberg owed his command of the allied armies to the memory of what the coalition diplomats called 'sa belle campagne politique' in Poland."⁶² Metternich bided his time. Its coming did not take him unawares.

CHAPTER III

AUSTRIA'S ENTREMISE - THE OFFER OF GOOD OFFICES

Lying fairly in the middle of Europe, Austria found herself in constant danger of becoming the battle ground of two great imperialistic powers. Russia and France were to be feared as allies or enemies. But in 1812, Metternich found protection in an alliance with Napoleon and a tacit agreement with Alexander. A defensive cordon, nominally an auxiliary to the French army, kept the lands of the Empire free of foreign soldiery. The understanding with Russia allowed that auxiliary to remain on the defensive. It must be well understood, however that Metternich did not think of the Russian arrangement as basis for a combination against Napoleon. French preponderance, limited, as he thought by the life span of Bonaparte, was preferable to permanent Russian supremacy. He awaited the right moment for bringing forward a general peace of Europe, calculated to allay the threat of both empires.

Prussia, now virtually a French province, looked to Austria for guidance in the dilemma. Chancellor Hardenberg wrote to Metternich in September 1812, to ask for direction on his country's future policy.² The Austrian minister did not answer for some time. As the war began to favor Russia, his thoughts turned again to peace. He wrote Hardenberg that he was thoroughly resolved against "useless sacrifices." He had never wavered, he said, from his original conception of the task before them. "We must strive to emerge from this contest, and finish it, with the least possible harm to the preservation of the appearance of independence. We must by all means

in our power, so direct ourselves as to regain in the future that veritable independence which is the health of states; we must not risk our existence on a single card. Such is the one and only end of my solicitude. The ways of attaining it are the more difficult because no conduct offers complete security. I limit myself to ways of ending the frightful complication of the moment, and to the arrival at a more stable state of affairs, however intermediate it may be." He felt called upon therefore, to propose peace to England, to France, and even to Russia, though he felt no reliance upon the latter.³

Metternich wrote thus on October 5. A fortnight later, the last of Napoleon's troops had evacuated Moscow.⁴ The disastrous retreat had begun. Otto, the French ambassador to Austria, began to hear talk of peace.⁵ On October 28, it was learned at Vienna through Humboldt's report, that Napoleon had sent General Lauriston to Russian headquarters; that a rapprochement was, or might be impending. Metternich acted at once, for a peace between these two powers alone, would be only a truce. Hope of stable equilibrium in Europe, would be as distant as before.

Floret had been invited to Vilna as Austrian charge d'affaires on October 16.⁶ To him, Metternich sent an urgent instruction. Maret, French foreign secretary, was to be informed that Austria desired to negotiate a general peace. There was ample foundation for the offer. At Dresden in May, Napoleon had spoken favorably of a peace with England, and suggested Austrian action for it. Before Floret received the despatch from Vienna, Metternich had selected a trustworthy messenger for a voyage to England. The letter

(dated November 9, 1812) to be delivered by the envoy, was shown to Hardenberg by Count Zichy, Austrian representative at Berlin. The Prussian Chancellor approved the mission, although unable, he said, to expose his government by publicly seconding it.⁸

More extended despatches to Floret on December 9, pressed upon France the acceptance of Austria's good offices. In one instruction, intended for the eyes of Maret, Metternich outlined in detail the state of Europe. Russia, he declared, would never make a separate peace while she held the advantage; the difficulties of a second campaign against her made further hostilities unwise. It would be futile to ask England to negotiate separately, when by so doing she would alienate her allies. A general peace on a reasonable basis could be offered to all powers by Austria. "The Emperor Francis, alone, can speak to France, to England, and to Russia, language which offends neither the amour propre of rival governments and enemies, nor the national sentiments of their peoples."⁹

Napoleon had now left his retreating army, and was hastening to Paris. "He did not seem to have at once realized the full significance of the events in Russia," says Fournier.¹⁰ Arriving at Dresden on December 14, he despatched a letter to his father-in-law. It began with an expression of confidence in Austria's desire for a prompt and "satisfactory peace," and ended with a request for a corps of 60,000 men in Galicia and Transylvania. No mention^{11.} was made of accepting peace offers. Nevertheless, the arrival of this letter on the 20th, gave sufficient opening for the departure¹² of General Bubna to Paris with the Austrian Emperor's reply. In Bubna's instructions, Metternich stated clearly that the messenger

was in no sense, charged with a negotiation. He was sent merely to ascertain the intentions of Napoleon. Yet "M. de Bubna will not conceal from the Emperor Napoleon, our conviction that a general peace on generous basescould alone repair the disasters of the present campaign." More active participation on the part of Austria in future campaigns, was not to be expected.¹³

At Paris, the Austrian envoy found Napoleon doubtful whether Russia or England had any desire for peace. Bubna reported this to Vienna. Floret, who had been sent to Paris on January 3, received despatches en route, giving Metternich's belief that the powers would be amenable to a general pacification.¹⁴ There seems to have been considerable feeling in Austrian official circles, that England's financial status was such as to preclude continued hostilities. Russia would follow her ally, it was thought.¹⁵

In the first days of January, Napoleon called a council on foreign affairs upon the Austrian proposals. Two questions were presented. Should offers of peace be entertained? In case of an affirmative decision, should direct negotiations be opened with Russia, or should the good offices of Austria be accepted? The council voted to consider peace proposals advanced by Austria, though her general good faith was distrusted.¹⁶ On January 7, then, Napoleon replied to the Austrian Emperor's letter of December 20. Consideration of the good offices took up a very small space in this missive. Bonaparte announced that he would not oppose any plan of pacific settlement proposed by Austria - but he laid down rigid conditions of acceptance. No jot of territory once united by Senatus Consultes, would ever be relinquished. By far the greater

part of the letter consisted of a resume of the Russian campaign - put in its best light, of course - together with a forecast of future campaigns. A long analysis of French arms and resources was evidently intended to show how little Napoleon's supremacy had been disturbed by the disasters of the winter.¹⁷

On the next day, Maret despatched a letter to Metternich. Less restraint was demanded by a communication between the ministers, and Maret said everything that Napoleon was kept from saying by the etiquette of royal correspondence. He impugned the good faith of Austria,¹⁸ and sharply criticised her conduct in the war. These two replies, showed plainly how far from peace were Napoleon's thoughts.

Meanwhile, the Austrian letter of November 9, had been received in England by a ministry intent not on peace, but on the overthrow of Napoleon. Austria had offered herself as the logical mediator, at a crisis which she considered most advantageous for a general peace. British reaction to the offer, may be judged from a memorandum written supposedly by Cooke, an undersecretary of the foreign office. The matter of peace was ignored, the writer confining himself to assurances that right and duty demanded that Austria dissolve her alliance with France.¹⁹

But Metternich had no intention of forsaking France, for by so doing he would lay himself open to attack, with no aid in sight except that of Russia. And Russia had deserted Austria many times. Furthermore, now that Prussia was impotent, he had no intention of helping to crush France - his single threat against the onward march of the Bear. For these reasons, when Walpole came secretly to

Vienna from St. Petersburg late in 1812, with English inducements²⁰ for Austria's joining the coalition, he was given no encouragement. The revolts in the Tyrol region, being stirred up by the British agent, King, were suppressed by Austria as an ally of France. When Metternich later discovered King's part in this intrigue, he expelled²¹ him from the country.

While rejecting such English proposals, the Austrian minister was called upon to define his government's attitude toward Prussia, as well. The status of that power had changed since Hardenberg's letter to Metternich of September, 1812. On December 30, General Yorck had signed a truce with the Russian General Diebitsch, agreeing not to fight against Russia for two months, even though the King should repudiate the arrangement and order the troops to rejoin the French army. Yorck, an old style Prussian, with strong aversion to reformers like Scharnhorst and Stein, was forced to this action by the rising tide of national sentiment. Alexander declared that he would lay down arms only when Prussia had been reconstructed as of 1806. This appeal separated the dynastic ambitions of the Berlin government, from the popular aims. Hardenberg had been thinking of Poland, and hoped to get it by a French victory.²² The Tauroggen truce changed matters significantly. When news of the agreement reached Berlin (January 4), General Knesebeck was sent at once to²³ Vienna to make an arrangement on Poland.

But Metternich was still maneuvering for a satisfactory Austrian position, and could not afford to compromise relations with Napoleon by consorting with a power which had violated an alliance with France. He promised Knesebeck that Austrian troops would not

be used against Prussia, and the envoy from Berlin left Vienna on January 30, with that assurance and no more. ²⁴

That day, Metternich sent off instructions to Count Zichy at Berlin. The present object, he wrote, was a state of affairs stable to the degree that its bases gave guarantee of its duration. In this, the interest of Prussia as an intermediary power between France and Russia, lay side by side with that of Austria. It would be useless to pretend that no danger attended the present Russian advance. But Austria must not deviate from the proper course of action. "I am moved to caution you anew," he concluded, "that for the time being, you should maintain the strictest neutrality." ²⁵

Metternich thus turned a cold shoulder on English invitations to desert France; and held aloof from entangling Austria in the Prussian defection. Russia, however, he had yet to consider. Two distinct objectives governed the Austrian policy in that quarter. Metternich wished first, to prevent the signing of a separate treaty between Russia and France; second, to insure Austrian frontiers against any inroad.

The Czar had twice in November made fruitless advances to the Vienna court. On December 29, he invited the Emperor Francis to take possession of his ancient frontiers. ²⁶ On January 8, Schwarzenberg, commanding the Austrian auxiliary corps, was approached by Anstett, Russian agent. Assurance was given that the Czar had never thought of the reestablishment of Poland. No change in the reigning dynasty of France was contemplated. Anstett produced powers to sign an armistice of three months duration, and revealed a "secret" instruction offering to Austria her ancient

limits, including "Lublin and Cracovia".²⁷ But Metternich was not to be tricked into compromising himself with Napoleon by such a move.

Alexander's declaration on Poland was insincere, even as Metternich suspected. The Polish patriot, Czartoryski, had received assurance from the monarch, that his nation would yet be revived. The jealousy of Austria and Prussia, he said, made any immediate²⁸ action impossible.²⁹ Metternich learned of this correspondence. His resolution not to throw himself into the arms of the coalition, was strengthened by this evidence of Russian duplicity.

Meantime, Napoleon's letter of January 7, had convinced the Austrian diplomat that whatever the difficulty attached, a stronger attitude must unavoidably be assumed. A truce with Russia would allow the Imperial troops to retire toward a more favorable defensive position. On January 24, therefore, instructions were sent to Schwarzenberg, authorizing the signature of a truce terminable at two weeks' notice. This was carried out on January 30, and the³⁰ Austrian auxiliary corps retired from the fighting zone.

Metternich was now ready to press his good offices. His reply to the French correspondence of January 7, 8, consisted of three separate pieces. On January 23, 24, the Emperor Francis answered Napoleon's letter. On January 23, Metternich replied to³¹ Maret's letter. On January 25, he sent a long instruction to Bubna. "It is left to the Emperor of France," he wrote Bubna, "to convince us that the present war is an Austrian war; the first step has been taken; he has accepted our intervention.....; if the conditions on which he will favor peace are of such a nature as to

prove to the Emperor of Austria, and to the nation, that the cause of our ally is our cause; we will lend far more assistance than the Emperor Napoleon actually expects." This was not rhetoric. Metternich was fighting for the stability of Europe. Austria would ally herself with the party whose views pointed toward that ideal. All the communications to the French court sounded the same note. Oncken sums it up in two phrases: Bubna was to deny the imputation of bad faith, and certify Napoleon's acceptance of the Austrian good offices. ³³ "What does the Emperor of Austria write to me?" said Napoleon when Bubna came into his presence. The envoy read the letter of January 23.

Peace and stability, Francis declared, were now imperative. A reign of twenty years' duration had taught him to know the minds of his people. No more sacrifices which did not lead plainly to a "general tranquillity," could be demanded of them.

Then Bubna read the Emperor's retort to the threatening tone in Napoleon's letter of January 7, with its accusation of bad faith. Bonaparte began to regret his hasty temper. He agreed; after reading a copy of his own letter, that it did appear to be a threat, and begged Bubna to assure the Austrian Emperor that it had not been written in that sense.

But the conciliating tone of this interview was not destined to last out the morning. The Austrian envoy now produced the second letter from Francis, to which was attached Schwarzenberg's instructions to sign a truce. The announcement of this intention took Napoleon unawares. "It is the first step of defection," he cried. "Any hope of peace is lost. England and Russia will see

your disposition..... I have accepted your intervention for peace, but an armed mediator does not suit me." The army would be badly effected by this move, he said. The Viceroy would be forced to retreat. But he would exhort his people, raise new levies, perhaps withdraw behind the Rhine. He would make advances to Russia; "two great powers can always find ways of conciliating each other, and henceforth you cannot depend on me."³⁴

Much of this was temper, of course. Napoleon was not yet ready to abandon Austria. However, the truce with Russia marked a beginning of the shift to a new position which Metternich would later find inevitable if an equilibrium in Europe was to be obtained.

The missions to England and Russia, on February 8, were a part of Metternich's original "entremise" plan, and as such not affected by the Bubna interview. The instructions given Wessenberg for the London journey, were virtually the same as those furnished to Lebzeltern as envoy to Russian headquarters.³⁵ However, a certain difference existed in the Austrian policy toward the two courts. Metternich said, that it was governed by the fact that England had always followed a consistent line of conduct, while Russia had changed more than once. The Czar's last turn with the wind had brought good fortune, and it could not be denied that this fortune might awaken "ideas of conquest incompatible with our interests"³⁶

The offer which the envoys were to make, may be summed up briefly as follows: An equilibrium in Europe is a necessity. Circumstances now offer a fair chance of obtaining that equilibrium. Austria is the logical intermediary through which it may be arranged. The present need is not for a detailed peace, but for preliminaries

by which the general bases may be established. Austria suggests a Congress at Prague, or elsewhere if the Powers desire, to decide upon these bases, be they *uti possidetis*, compensations, or what not.

In the light of Metternich's policy, it may be seen that the chief aim of the Austrian diplomat was to secure English acceptance of peace negotiations. He expected little from a victorious Russia. But to the English ministry, through Wessenberg, he pleaded the necessity of regaining a balance between France and Russia, and the function of Austria in striking the balance. It is no exaggeration to say, that he was pleading for the very existence of Austria. Five years only, had passed, since strollers on the boulevards of Paris were dividing Austria into petty kingdoms; and Metternich had heard the gossips in the cafes erect two mighty empires of Europe, while sipping an aperitif.

At Paris, now, Napoleon was not deserting Austria despite the bad temper with which he had received the news of the Russian truce. He was, also, still willing to make peace with England, whatever his feelings toward Alexander. In January, Floret had protested that the text of the report to the Senate on foreign affairs would make the English mission impossible. The French Emperor declared that the report had been entirely oral, and that Austria was authorized to deny that the published details on peace were those of the government. ³⁷ As late as March 18, Napoleon wrote to Francis V, to make amends for the interruption of Wessenberg's journey by the police at Hambourg. If he should learn that the Austrian envoy's papers had been tampered with, he promised to prosecute the offenders as criminals. Bonaparte was evidently in

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sympathy with the English mission.

During the month of the February, the increasing evidence of Russian intrigues in Poland, spurred Metternich to strengthen his arguments at the French court. His despatches to Bubna and Floret, were full of new details on the Polish question. He characterised the Poles as "that nation which takes on any color, whose very breath is intrigue and secret dealing; and has become Polish only since it has ceased to be Polish." ³⁹ He likened them to the emigre's who came to allied courts during the first wars of the revolution, with disastrous results for all those who lent ear to their pleadings. Like all men without a country they had ⁴⁰ nothing to lose and much to gain by the efforts of others.

Of more import than the Polish difficulties was the rising tide of popular feeling against France. In instructions to the Austrian envoys at Paris, Metternich urged this development as a prime reason for making peace. Everywhere, he said, at Vienna, in Berlin, throughout Germany, "l'esprit d'effervescence" rose day by day. In Bohemia there is a strong disposition against France. "At home, our language in the name of peace, alone keeps a strong ⁴¹ party from embarrassing the government."

Metternich was still fighting for a peace. He had no desire to see the rising tide of national hatreds sweep France out of Alexander's path. Above all he feared it, when that monarch was already marching eastward, flushed with victory over Napoleon, sweeping Prussia triumphantly before him, holding out high hopes to the Poles, and lending his ear to the confidences of Stein, the most radical of German nationalists, and consequently the bitterest

Napoleon hater.

While Metternich was urging peace at Paris, forces were gathering which were soon to effect a change in his attitude. The necessity of a stronger position than a mere "entremise", became gradually apparent as winter drew to an end. It appeared first, out of the north with the onward march of the Russian armies. Alexander's generals, always more conservative and more Russian than their emperor, had strongly urged a halt at the Vistula, with the idea of making that frontier a condition of peace. But both Nesselrode and Stein had advocated the advance. Stein because he thought it would further the nationalistic movement in Germany; Nesselrode because he considered a long and secure peace possible only when France had been forced back within its natural frontiers. Both argued that an advance would bring Prussia and Austria into the coalition and thus make Napoleon's defeat inevitable. Here was the opportunity, Stein told Alexander to become the benefactor⁴² and peace maker of Europe. So Russia advanced.

The Prussian government did not meet Alexander with open arms. King Frederick William's ambition in Poland precluded that. With Alexander's advance, a conflict appeared between the nationalistic emotions of popular movements like the Tugenbund, and the dynastic ambition of the Prussian government. The Tauroggen convention in December, was a decided victory for the popular party, the truce with Russia having been signed without authority from Berlin. As soon as Hardenberg heard of it, he sent Knesebeck to Vienna to get Austria's support. Metternich, it will be remembered, would not commit himself and Knesebeck returned on January 30. On

February 8, he was sent to Russian headquarters to negotiate an alliance. The King had in mind, an arrangement which would protect him from Napoleon until a general peace could be arranged. He had no thought of a war for the overthrow of Bonaparte.⁴³ But the people did have that thought, as Metternich well knew.⁴⁴ He warned Napoleon repeatedly of this rising national tide.

Knesebeck held out obstinately in the parleys at Kalisch for the return of Prussia's old possessions in Poland. Alexander, on Stein's suggestion, appealed to the Prussian government (now at Breslan). The army was in a state of high excitement. The King was forced to relinquish the old dynastic ambitions for those of his people, and the treaty was signed at Kalisch on February 28. In the negotiations Alexander had hinted that Saxony was a better field for Prussian ambition than Poland. This, perhaps, influenced the decision at Breslau to relinquish Polish claims.⁴⁵ Alexander's hint was destined in the next eighteen months, to become one of the serious barriers to the resettlement of Europe. A new treaty, reflecting the national character of the alliance, was made at Breslau on March 19. A proclamation was issued, dissolving the Confederation of the Rhine.⁴⁶

This alliance between Russia and Prussia was a factor in the necessity for assumption of a new Austrian position. Metternich had not been adverse to an alliance based on much the same idea as that of the King of Prussia. But the character of the Kalisch-Breslan negotiations forced upon the Austrian diplomat some very serious conclusions. The ambitions of Russia would be aided considerably, since Prussia's weight as an intermediary power had now swung to her side of the balance. The spirit with which the Prussians greeted

the alliance, showed that the downfall of Napoleon was uppermost in their minds. Metternich had long been convinced that when Napoleon's rule ended, France would again be plunged into anarchy; the only check against Russian power would be completely effaced.⁴⁷ Lastly, the turn given the proceedings by Stein and other German radicals, indicated a revival of Prussian rivalry against Austria. Castlereagh also saw this and regretted it, but he felt that the main object was to get Prussia into the war. Other considerations must,⁴⁸ of necessity, be subordinated.

Metternich was not taken unawares by the turn of events. In anticipation of the new and stronger position, he gave to the states of the German Confederation assurances that they need fear no Austrian domination. No aggrandizement at their expense was intended. In the middle of February, Metternich declared that a return to the old order of things was not contemplated; that Francis would not accept the Imperial crown if it were offered to him.⁴⁹ Some attempts were made to gain support for Austrian armed mediation. With the new position in view, Metternich opened negotiations with Saxony,⁵⁰ with Bavaria, and with Murat.

The Austrian minister now turned his attention to the northern allies. He hoped to gain some influence on their actions by bringing himself in closer touch with Alexander. Since both Russia and Prussia had pledged themselves at Kalisch to urge Austrian entrance into the coalition, an approach to Alexander was not difficult. Lebzeltern, on account of the Czar's presence at the alliance negotiations, had little conversation with him until March 8, a month from the date of the Austrians envoy's first instructions.

Alexander spoke very pleasantly of Russian relations with Austria. Definite terms of peace, however, he would not offer until informed of the reception which they would receive. Lebzeltern refused to state any bases for peace, because, he said, the role of a mere "entremise", would not permit it. At present, Austria was merely offering to communicate and arrange terms proposed by both parties to the war. The Czar declared that Austria must regain all her possessions; Prussia acquire her independence; Germany be freed with new arrangements for government, or preferably united as before under Austrian dominion. Lebzeltern asked if these were the Russian terms; if he could transmit them to his court. Alexander demurred at that.
51

"I have a very simple plan to offer you," he said to Lebzeltern. The "simple plan" was merely a scheme to compromise Austria. She was to resume her old frontiers, with the declaration that she merely took possession of what belonged to her; to announce that she was not making war on France, but confronting the powers that wished to attack that country. Then a general congress should be proposed. If England brought exaggerated pretensions there "we shall act in concert - the interests of the continent above everything."
52

The baldness of this scheme must have amused Metternich. On March 23, he sent off an instruction which was intended to give the Czar, through the medium of the Austrian envoy, an impression that Metternich was now sympathetic with the Allied cause.

He even allowed himself to suggest a proclamation which might be issued by the coalition. It is interesting to note that many of the phrases were to be included in the Allied declaration to France, drawn up by Metternich nine months later. "Let the Allies announce

generally," he wrote, "that they make war neither on France nor on Germany, but on Napoleon outside of France; that the object of their efforts is the reestablishment of a state of equilibrium between the great powers,..., that the powers of the second and third rank ought not to lose any actual strength, but that it is desired that they enjoy all the rights of sovereignty with the greatest independence; this language will completely reassure the southern courts and have more effect than all the negotiations possible."⁵³

Metternich's scheme for the complete independence of the German states was very different from that of Alexander. On March 29, Alexander assured Lebzeltern again, that Austria was invited to enter her old territories and assume her ancient preponderance over the states of Germany. The settlement of north Germany was to be regulated by the Allies, but Austria would be given carte blanche⁵⁴ for south Germany.

On March 29, as a result of Metternich's quasi-understanding with Alexander, Lebzeltern and Nesselrode signed a convention to end the truce of January 30, in order that Austrian troops might retire in the face of superior forces, to Bohemia. There, as elsewhere in the Empire, new levies were being raised in preparation for⁵⁵ a stronger Austrian position.

The day before the termination of the Russian truce, new instructions were sent forward to Prince Schwarzenberg, who was now returning to his post as ambassador to France. Metternich was still urging on Napoleon acceptance of offers to negotiate a peace. In the instructions of March 28, he followed his usual line of argument.

By peace, Austria meant "a just equilibrium between the great powers", and "the independence and well being of those of the second and third rank." She did not intend in the expression "equilibrium"-a return to the old order, for "that would be wasteing precious means of establishing an order conformable to the needs of the times." The return of Prussia to her old independence was considered indispensable. 56

The most important passage in the despatch of March 28, is that which mentions Spain and the Ottoman Empire. The latter, Metternich says, has not been considered in the peace because its existence is demanded by the need of all states. Spain, has been omitted, because it has become an Anglo-French problem, entirely. This statement throws a strong light on Metternich's predominant characteristic - practicability. He was eager for a maritime peace and had been urging it since 1810. He had considered it necessary for a stable equilibrium in Europe, since 1801. ⁵⁷ But there seemed little chance for such a peace now. Though England had not yet sent formal refusal of the present offers, the Austrian minister was expecting it, very shortly. If he could not arrange a general peace now, he would at least press for a continental settlement. Apparantly Napoleon, at that time, really desired peace with England. Perhaps that desire was his major motive in countenancing the Austrian "entremise". Perhaps he was trying to bind Austria closer to him, by demonstrating the complete hostility of England toward peace.

On April 9, Schwarzenberg had an audience with Napoleon. He repeated the ideas on a stable peace which had been set forth in his instructions. To Napoleon's repeated doubts as to England's desire for peace, Schwarzenberg reiterated the Austrian belief in

British willingness to agree upon reasonable bases. Napoleon thereupon took some pains to show the Austrian general the extent of his military preparations. He had not yet given up hopes of Austrian aid. On April 8, 9, Schwarzenberg talked also with the Duke of Bassano (Maret), minister of foreign relations. Maret pressed the ambassador for news of England's reception of the good offices. Schwarzenberg answered that he had not been informed as yet of the definite stand which the British government would take. 58

The English refusal of the good offices now brought matters to a head. When Wessenberg arrived in London, at the end of March, he found popular feeling strong against peace - stronger even than the sentiment of the government itself. Castlereagh declared that the Prince Regent had no desire to even entertain proposals, and seemed very anxious lest Wessenberg's mission bring disrepute to the ministry. 59 The English intention not to accept the offers was strengthened by the news from the continent during the month of February. The report of the French minister of foreign affairs in January, had prejudiced the negotiation before Wessenberg had begun his journey. But armed with Napoleon's authority to deny any official declaration in the published report, he had left Vienna on February 8. 60 Then Napoleon compromised his chances once more, On February 14, the new Concordat with the Pope was sent to the Legislative Assembly. The imperial message transmitting it contained some remarks on the Spanish war, which indicated small desire or expectation of peace in the mind of the Emperor. 61

On the pretext of that message, Castlereagh rejected the Austrian proposal that England might arrange peace by ceding certain

colonial conquests. He felt that the Vienna court could no longer offer its "entremise" without compromising itself, since the grounds on which it was based no longer existed. He wrote Metternich on April 9, that peace was not possible at that time, and concluded by inviting Austria to join the Allies in forcing Napoleon to his
62
knees.

CHAPTER IV.

AUSTRIA - ARMED MEDIATOR OF THE CONTINENT

Simultaneously with the failure of entremise efforts at London and Paris on April 9, events elsewhere forced Metternich to assume a new attitude. Narbonne the new French ambassador at Vienna, was demanding in the name of his government that Austria enter the war as "partie principale" if Great Britain did not entertain proposals for negotiation. Metternich, adroitly enough, declared on April 11 that this demanded a position beyond that of an auxiliary in a defensive alliance. If the refusal of offers was to force Austria into an aggressive war, then she must mediate peace as an armed power. The decision to take this stand at so early a date, may have been influenced by the increasing popular hostility¹ against Metternich in Vienna.

On the same day, the Austrian minister wrote to Lebzeltern, whom he had ordered to terminate the armistice, asking why his instructions had not been carried into effect.² He had not yet learned of the convention agreed to on March 29. Napoleon, still counting on Austrian help, made a last bid for support from his father-in-law. On April 13, news reached the Austrian capitol that Napoleon, before leaving for the war, was conferring the Regency upon the Empress Marie-Louise. "If this was done to flatter Austria," wrote Gentz to Caradja, "it can be said that it has completely failed.³ But it is true that it has presented embarrassments." In all probability, the "embarrassments" were those arising from the suspicions with which the Allies looked upon this action. English

diplomats thought it a piece of cajolery, calculated to make the Austrian Emperor amenable to a closer alliance. From Russian headquarters Lebzelter reported suspicions on the part of the Czar, and a continued unwillingness to place himself, as it were, in Austrian hands.⁴

News of the termination of the Russian truce, by the convention of March 29, reached Metternich on April 16.⁵ Austria moved very swiftly to the new position. On April 20, 21, 23, Narbonne in conversations with Metternich and the Emperor Francis was given official notice that the circumstances of the impending war nullified the alliance arrangement of March, 1912.⁶ On the day of the first interview, a treaty was signed with the King of Saxony, by which that sovereign, in return for a guarantee of his kingdom, promised to support Austria's armed mediation.⁷

Metternich did not at once announce to the Allies the assumption of the new position. Apparently this was to be done through a special envoy, Count Stadion, whose prospective sending was made known in a letter to Chancellor Hardenberg, April 16.⁸

Although Napoleon had departed for headquarters shortly after the audience with Schwarzenberg, and before news of the developments at Vienna had arrived, earlier reports of Narbonne had left him with considerable doubt as to the good faith of his father-in-law. Also, when he joined his troops in Germany, he heard rumors of suspicious dealings with Saxony, Bavaria, and other minor states. He sent off orders to General Clarke in Italy to bring his troops into line.

"I do not suspect her disposition," he said of Austria, "nevertheless my intention is to be prudent and not to depend on her."⁹

At Mayence and Erfurt, the French Emperor reviewed the new

recruits, called up to replace losses of the disastrous campaign in Russia. In the last days of April, camp was broken, and the new army moved in the direction of Leipzig. The Allies, to Napoleon's surprise, moved forward at the same time. Ney's troops, mostly new recruits, were attacked at Lützen on the morning of May 2. After fighting all day, the Allies were forced to retire. Thus hostilities
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opened with a victory for Napoleon.

Austria's armed mediation was confined to the continent by the English refusal. However, on the continent, Metternich had yet to obtain the recognition of the new position. Definite terms of peace must be conveyed from Austria to the belligerent parties - terms which the mediator would be willing to forcibly defend.

On May 7, before the news of Lützen had reached Vienna, Stadion was despatched to Russian headquarters to arrange definite mediation bases. Metternich thus restated the Austrian principle. France has conquered the continent. England has conquered the sea and with it, French possessions abroad. France must give up conquests on the continent. England ought to place just compensations in the balance of peace. Austria does not intend a return to the old order, but is convinced that "a veritable state of repose cannot exist without a general and maritime peace." If Prussia and Russia, knowing England's attitude, saw little chance for such an arrangement, Stadion was to say that Austria thought a general peace might be brought about through a prior continental peace. The Austrian envoy was to declare that the actions of his country were not dependent upon the events of the war, and that there was no desire to delay military action if it was necessary.

Metternich outlined three sets of terms - an ideal peace, the

Austrian minimum, his idea of the Allied minimum. As a maximum or ideal continental peace, he listed: the reestablishment of Poland as before the peace of Vienna (1809); reestablishment of Prussia in her former possessions in northern Germany; restitution by France of all German territory beyond the Rhine; dissolution of the Confederation of the Rhine; Holland made independent of France. In Italy he recommended the restitution of all French provinces; reestablishment of the Pope in his former possessions; independence of the Kingdom of Italy. For Austria a frontier in Italy as before the Treaty of Luveville; restitution of the Tyrol, the Immdertel and the Dalmation provinces.

These terms were, however, only Austria's secret ideal. Her real pretensions, that is to say, the bases on which she was willing to fight for a peace, were more modest. For herself she demanded only the recovery of Dalmatia, the dissolution of the Duchy of Warsaw and a new frontier against Bavaria. Outside of Austria she considered as necessary: the return of southern Prussia to King Frederick William; renunciation by France of German provinces beyond the Rhine, with at least a partial dissolution of the Confederation of the Rhine, or a modification of the organization. It may be seen that
11
Metternich was willing to sacrifice much for peace.

On May 11, Count Bubna was sent to Napoleon with essentially the same instructions. Metternich had shown Stadion's instructions to Count Narbonne, the French ambassador, in order to prove that the armed mediation was not favoring either party. In the Bubna instructions, emphasis was placed on an independent Germany, and the dissolution of the Duchy of Warsaw. Austria considered these conditions

most important.

An independent Germany was necessary to her idea of intermediary powers in the balance between France and Russia. A breaking up of the Duchy of Warsaw would prevent Alexander's intrigues for getting hold of that territory. Prague was suggested as the place for a negotiation on these bases. Bubna was authorized to notify Stadion at Russian headquarters, if Napoleon asked for an armistice. ¹²

Stadion was greeted cordially, on his arrival at Allied headquarters. Alexander had been urging Austria to declare her terms, since his first conversation with Lebzeltern. Furthermore, Stadion in his politics had always been strongly anti-French. His appointment to this mission, therefore, augured well for Austrian sentiments.

The terms with which Nesselrode met the Austrian demand for a statement of war aims, were given Stadion at Würschen on May 16. They were beyond the minimum of Stadion's secret instructions. Russia, in addition, insisted on the complete dissolution of the Confederation of the Rhine, the freedom of Holland, the exclusion of France from Italy, and the restoration of the Bourbons in Spain. The last was, ¹³ of course, included in courtesy to England. Stewart, English envoy to Prussia, was impatient at the delay entailed by the Austrian negotiation, and spoke derisively of "Stadion with the gout," trying to make peace at such a moment. Cathcart expected Austria to come ¹⁴ into the war on the Allied side, within a short time.

On the day of the Wurschen meeting, Bubna arrived in Dresden. On May 8, Napoleon had brought the King of Saxony back into the ranks of French allies, by marching into his capitol. Senfft, Saxon minister, was informed by Napoleon, that Metternich had declared that

Austria had no-alliance with Saxony. Therefore, the King may have revealed to Bonaparte the course of Austrian negotiations. From Narbonne at Vienna, came complaints that Cariatì, Murat's aide-de-camp, was in Vienna consorting with French enemies, and with Austria. Napoleon sent off a note to Naples, demanding the recall of Cariatì.

Bubna's reception at Dresden was exceedingly stormy. Bonaparte boasted that he would not aid a single village which had been constitutionally united with France. What compensation, he demanded, did Austria offer for Illysia? Nothing. Russia had fought him, and had a right to set terms. Austria had no right. "I have bought Illyria with the loss of a million men," he said, "you shall not have it by force without as great a sacrifice." "The exaltation of your nation of which you boast, will disappear as soon as the Emperor demands sacrifices of it." A continental peace was out of the question. He would agree only to a general peace which included arrangement of maritime difficulties.

For all his temper, Bonaparte was anxious to gain time. He sent Bubna back to Vienna on the 17th, with a proposal for a general congress, to which Napoleon was willing to admit even the Spanish insurgents. If England would not enter, he would negotiate a continental peace. France was willing to conclude an armistice.

The Monitor announced the decision to the French public on May 24. A congress at Prague had been proposed by Napoleon, to which even the United States was to be invited. This was a note designed to catch the French fancy. "If England, through that sentiment of egoism on which her politics is founded, refuses to cooperate in making the peace of the world, because she wishes to exclude from the universe that element which makes up three quarters of the globe..." the Emperor

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will make a continental peace.

Napoleon seems to have had several motives in making this move. First, he wished to play the part of a peace-maker before the nation; second, to keep Austria out of the war until he could make a separate arrangement with Austria. He had long been contemplating this move. At the very time of Bubna's audience in Dresden, Caulaincourt was being sent to Russian headquarters. He was to offer Poland to the Czar; the Duchy of Warsaw and Republic of Dantzic to Prussia; and to ask for Prussia's cession of the territory west of the Oder - Brandenburg to go to the King of Westphalia, the Silesian portion to Saxony.

"Say to the Czar," said Napoleon, "that my intention moreover is to make a ^{new} post d'or to deliver him from the intrigues of Metternich. If I have sacrifices to make, I prefer that they be to the profit of the Emperor Alexander who makes fair war against me, and of the King of Prussia in whom Russia is interested, than to the profit of Austria who has betrayed the alliance, and who, under the title of mediator assumes the right to dispose of everything, after having played the part that suited her."
20

On the day after Bubna's interview, Napoleon sent a new instruction to Caulaincourt, advising him of the proposal for a Congress, and giving powers to negotiate a truce.
21 When that despatch arrived, hostilities had recommenced. Caulaincourt had no opportunity to offer either a separate peace or a truce. The Czar refused to grant an audience, and the French envoy was informed
22 that Russia had accepted Austrian mediation.

Bubna returned to Vienna on May 22, and was sent back to

French headquarters on the next day with new instructions.

Metternich had his own reasons for not wishing a general congress where France might arrange with Russia to leave Austria in the cold. He had been guarding against such a chance, from the time when Napoleon sent General Lauriston to Russian headquarters in October, 1812. Therefore he declared through Bubna, that a general congress was altogether impractical, that a negotiation should be held to establish the broad bases of peace, and a general congress assembled later to arrange the details. The Austrian envoy was furnished with three sets of instructions, one to be used in the event of Napoleon's having won a battle; one in case no new developments had occurred; one, if Napoleon had been defeated. This gives the idea that Metternich was willing to advance beyond or retire from his original bases, but the instructions themselves were very similar in contents. The difference was one of emphasis and attitude, rather than of terms. ²³

Bubna, returning from Vienna, found Napoleon in the field. France had defeated the Allies at Bautzen on May 21-22, but only with great losses in the ranks, as well as among the officers of her Army. Napoleon had won two battles within the month, but both had cost him dearly. He was anxious to gain time for the assembling of new forces, and so pressed on the negotiation of an armistice. The French Emperor now wished to avoid seeing Bubna who might demand an answer to the Austrian terms. Refusal would throw Austria into the war, and so thwart the efforts to gain time. "Tell Bubna," he wrote to Maret on June 1, "that I sent overtures for an armistice in order to give the enemy an impression of weakness." The Austrian general's apprehension lest his instructions fall into Allied hands gave

Napoleon the idea that he was authorized to offer lower terms than he was then presenting. "See if he hasn't other proposition," he ordered Maret. If nothing was to be drawn from him, the French minister was to argue generalities on a maritime peace with England. "Try to penetrate all his instructions. I count on avoiding seeing them. If the armistice is not concluded, the circumstances of war will sufficiently justify that; if it is not, I will send you back to Dresden, where I shall be reputed to be coming, but where I shall not go."²⁴

Metternich, at Vienna, was now moved to take more decisive action. His decision was motivated by uneasiness over the Caulaincourt mission to Alexander, and the receipt of news from the battle of Bautzen. The first led him to desire a clearer understanding with Russia, and the second confirmed his belief that Austria must gain time in which to bring her troops into line on the frontier. The Russian retirement towards Silesia would leave Austria open to inroads from both sides on the outbreak of further hostilities.²⁵

On June 1, at five o'clock in the morning, the Emperor Francis and Count Metternich departed for Gitschin half way between Dresden and the Allied headquarters. Metternich had sent off despatches to Dresden, urging acceptance of Austrian mediation, and to Silesia announcing that the Emperor Francis was departing for the army. On June 2, the Austrian party met Nesselrode on his way to Vienna. The Czar had despatched him on May 30, because of Stadion's lack of instructions to accept the Wurschen bases. The Russian minister now returned to inform the Czar of Austria's willingness to discuss terms. The Emperor Francis proceeded to Gitschin, where he

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arrived on the third.

Meanwhile the negotiations for a truce had been going on since the battle of Bautzen. Napoleon issued an ultimatum, drawing the line of demarcation at the Elbe. Russia and Prussia found this acceptable but were in doubt as to the date for ending the armistice. July 26 had been suggested. The Allies in conference at Reichenbach hesitated between consideration for Austria's military condition and disinclination to give Napoleon so much time for new preparations. Stadion was asked to give his opinion, but the Austrian representative

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would not commit himself. Metternich was not ready for war. As Gentz wrote on June 5, it was still a question as to whether war or peace would best serve the Austrian ends - the reestablishment of a stable balance in Europe.

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The Prussian general, Knesebeck, was incensed at Stadion's tone, and stigmatised Austria as being intimidated by Napoleon, as preferring negotiations to war. Stadion did not deny the latter accusation. He declared that his master had little confidence in a resort to arms; that most certainly Austria would be anxious to gain "by negotiation and without drawing the sword the most essential conditions for the repose of Europe - conditions which were the very object of the war."

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The Allies for the time being were forced to be content with this expression. On June 4, the armistice was signed at Plaswitz. No reference was made of the British ambassadors or the Spanish war.

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Stewart wrote to Castlereagh that England must keep a sharp lookout, since the refusal of Austrian mediation offers.

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From June 3-19, Metternich was busy in Gitschin and Opocno negotiating the bases on which Russia and Prussia would accept the

Austrian mediation. He wished to reduce them to a minimum in order to give Napoleon no public excuse for rejection; and also to test his sincerity for peace. For Austria, there was danger that Napoleon aimed only at dissolving the alliance against him. He would be free³² then, to turn on his father-in-law.

The Austrian four minima for a continental peace were: the dissolution of the Duchy of Warsaw; the enlargement of Prussia by restoration of Danzig; the reversion of Illyrian provinces; the independence of the Haussestic towns. These four points, Austria would back with force. She regarded as advisable two others; the dissolution of the Confederation of the Rhine, and the restoration of Prussia as in 1806. Neither of these was regarded as indispensable conditions.³³

Both Alexander and King Frederick William, hesitated to desert English aims, by agreeing to these minima. They urged the mediation of a general peace. Metternich now realized that Austria alone, was sincere in the matter of appacification. He wrote to Stadion in that sense. Napoleon, he said, wishes to call a general congress for five weeks (the duration of the armistice). Russia and Prussia talk of negotiating a general peace in five weeks. The motives for both positions are easily discernible. Napoleon wishes to gain time, as well as to vindicate himself in the eyes of his people by showing that the Allied demands are immoderate. Russia and Prussia³⁴ have no desire for peace.

True, the northern powers were bent on war, but they were also³⁵ convinced of the necessity of having Austria with them. Believing that Napoleon would never submit to such terms himself, Russia and Prussia³⁶ agreed to the Austrian minima on June 14. Alexander,

thinking of his English subsidy agreement, stipulated that only a preliminary arrangement would be made on the bases of the four points; to be followed by a general pacification, not to be carried out without British cooperation and assent.³⁷ His decision to accede to the Austrian four points was in all probability influenced by knowledge of Metternich's willingness to sign an "eventual" concert. This treaty, based on the Austrian four points, was to become the stepping-stone to an alliance, if Napoleon refused to accept the same terms.

For Stadion had been given full powers to sign such an agreement, on June 11. In the instructions, however, Metternich declared that the treaty must remain secret, even from the allies of Russia and Prussia. He was preparing as always, for the future. If a continental peace should be arranged, he said, English ministers would be forced to bring before Parliament the history of the diplomatic relations on the continent. The publication of this treaty would prejudice Austria's chance of mediating a general and maritime peace.³⁸ The Austrian minister had not forgotten all that he had learned of the British government in his English journey of 1795. Every parliament, besides, demonstrated the public character of all British governmental actions. All Europe was influenced by the pressure of public opinion which this method aroused. Napoleon's publications had much the same effect.

The position of Russia and Prussia was not extremely "peculiar," as Gentz put it, for while accepting the Austrian four points they had signed subsidy treaties with England on the basis of

an active continuation of the war. They were pressed to this by pecuniary distress, "and the secret desires of the cabinets to reserve a pretext for escaping a peace which they fear."³⁹

The Allied explanation of this negotiation to the British ambassadors was not received with the best grace. Stewart complained that the two allies had lost sight of Spain and Holland. He found the distinction between a "preliminary peace" and a "general peace" extremely "curious"; Nor did he care for the play whereby "negotiators"⁴⁰ and not "plenipotentiaries" would be sent to discuss a peace. Had he known that Prussia and Russia were negotiating a treaty with Austria based on the four points, his language might have been stronger.

There is reason to believe that the two powers soon began to have misgivings regarding the step they had taken. Sometime before June 21, Hardenberg at Gitschin learned that the propositions agreed to, had not yet been communicated to Napoleon. He then asked Metternich to open the Würschen terms of May 16, instead. The Austrian minister declined, with the statement that Napoleon was waiting for just such terms in order to publish them as proof to the nation that war must be continued.⁴¹

In the midst of all this maneuvering, the Emperor Francis had held aloof, at Gitschin, half way between Dresden and the Allied headquarters. He refused to meet either Napoleon or the monarchs of Russia and Prussia. Meanwhile, at Dresden, the French Emperor was far from content with Metternich's diplomacy. He suspected his dealings with the Allies. As a safeguard, and counter-check, he now definitely took a position which he had often approached in

conversations with Bubna and Schwarzenberg. He required binding evidence of Austrian good faith. If, as Metternich had insisted, the alliance of March 14, 1812 was still unbroken, then new secret provisions must be negotiated.

Maret wrote to Metternich on June 15, that France would not accept the mediation of Austria, until the alliance question had been satisfactorily concluded. ⁴² News continued to reach French headquarters of Stadion's extended mission at Allied headquarters.

Metternich was known to have journeyed to Opocno, June 16-20, for a conference with Alexander. Bubna's lack of powers to negotiate new articles of alliance with Napoleon, gave an excellent excuse for summoning the Austrian minister. As a result, when Metternich returned to Gitschin, June 20, he found an invitation to come in person to Dresden. ⁴³ He informed the Allied Cabinets of his intention to accept, and left for Dresden, where arrived on June 25.

The next day he was closeted with Napoleon for eight hours, an interview which has become celebrated both for its results and for the complete uncertainty which still exists, as to the actual substance of the discussion. Writing in 1829, Metternich reproduced an exciting dialogue in which Napoleon exposed his true feelings with unbridled temper and recklessness. He, himself, remained as always, calm, moderate, reposed, but very much impressed with the importance of the occasion, and his own significance in it.

"I felt myself, at this crisis, the representative of all European society. If I may say so, Napoleon seemed small to me." ⁴⁴
Such are his words.

It is of no matter here, to ponder over the possibility of after-thought and the influence of later events, upon Metternich's conception in 1829, of his feelings in 1813. In his own report to Emperor Francis, made just after the event, however, Napoleon is represented as having been altogether rabid in his declarations.⁴⁵ Even Napoleon, reporting his own indiscretion to Maret, admitted saying to Metternich, "How much has England given you?" with other references to the negotiations then going on at Reichenbach. Metternich always denied that this entered the conversation.⁴⁶

However that may be, one thing is certain. Napoleon tried to pin Austria to the retention of an armed neutrality. Metternich answered that Austria did not offer neutrality, she offered mediation. That question having been settled, Bonaparte was left to accept or reject.⁴⁷ Then on June 29 Metternich modified this extreme attitude by renouncing any Austrian pretensions to being the sole intermediary of propositions made by one side or the other. He felt that a continental peace was alone possible "pour le moment," but assured the French government that a new overture was being made at London. He expressed even a willingness to arrange the alliance in the light of new circumstances.⁴⁸ When, however, Maret made known to Metternich his reception of full powers to negotiate a convention accepting the Austrian mediation; the latter suggested by note that "the stipulations of the said Treaty (of Alliance) which effect the impartiality of the Mediator, shall be suspended during the entire course of the negotiations."⁴⁹ Napoleon was extremely provoked at this communication, but negotiations proceeded.⁵⁰

It does not belong to this study, to enter into the historical controversy over the various responsibilities in the signing of the convention of Dresden. Who was it that first asked for an extension of the armistice? Such a question has little import here. Both Napoleon and Metternich were anxious to obtain such an extension. It was agreed that August 10 should be the date of termination, with six days leeway before the resumption of hostilities. Who drew up the convention? That too, is beside the point. Whoever may have been responsible for the final draft; whether Metternich as he claims in his memoir, or Maret as some historians contend; it is clear that: first, the French minister presented a plan for
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 a congress to settle a general peace. To this congress, were to be invited England, the United States, Spain, Portugal, and all the belligerent powers. But the refusal of England to accept the Austrian mediation made that project impossible. Therefore eventually, two conventions were proposed, one for a continental
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 peace, one for a general peace. The continental convention was agreed upon and signed. The convention for a general or maritime peace seems to have disappeared into the void. Ernouf says that after Maret had communicated it to Metternich, he heard nothing more
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 from it, despite "repeated solicitations."

Austria had now been recognized by both parties, as armed mediator of a continental peace. In order to gain this recognition from Prussia and Russia, she had been forced to accede to some preliminary or "eventual" arrangements. At Reichenbach, on June 27, Austria engaged herself to declare war against France if that

country had not accepted the Austrian four points by July 20, the date on which the armistice was to be terminated.⁵⁴ From June 30 to July 12, Austria was represented at the military conferences at Trachenberg, where the protocol was arranged which would assure her efficient participation in the general campaign in case she entered the war.⁵⁵ England was deliberately not invited to these conferences.

Was Metternich now ready to go to war against France? The Allies were far from confident, despite the definite course which the Austrian minister's policy had taken. It must be remembered that he must carry with him not only the Emperor Francis but all the influences which surrounded that monarch. On June 16, Stewart had written home that Metternich was finding it necessary to "wind up" the Emperor, at short intervals. The minister's stand, he said⁵⁶ seemed to be valiant enough.

On July 3, arrived the news of Wellington's victory of Vittoria. This evidence of allied success doubtless had some effect on Metternich's determination, but not as much as Jackson and Stewart thought.⁵⁷ Czartoriski expressed to Jackson a belief that Austria would never declare war against France.⁵⁸ In England, the general expectation was that Metternich's rise to power in Austria meant that no war would be undertaken.⁵⁹

On July 12, the Austrian minister requested from Emperor Francis definite instructions for Prague. The negotiation, he wrote, may have three distinct outcomes. Peace or preliminaries to peace may be accepted. France may refuse terms thus forcing Austria to make herself a party with the Allies. France may accept preliminaries and the Allies reject. From the third result Austria takes a fresh

position free from all ties. No question arises on the first possibility. In the second, Austria has already justified action by making the terms low. There is a possibility that the cession of Illyria might be excluded, as a sine qua non. The Allies cannot force the Empire to take Illyria if it does not wish. But care must be taken not to overstep the limit of eventually securing Illyria by the maritime peace. In the event of the third result, a decision must be made according to the circumstances of the moment. If the chances of the Allies appeared lower on August 10, than at present, then certainly Austria must join the Allies. Otherwise, armed neutrality must be assumed, a position essentially degrading to the nation.

Metternich summed up his report with the question: "Can I rely on the firmness of your Majesty, in case of Napoleon not accepting Austria's preliminaries of Peace; is your Majesty unalterably determined, in this case, to entrust the right cause to the arms of Austria, and the whole of united Europe?"⁶¹

The Emperor's reply was by no means as strong as Metternich desired. Peace is the object, said Francis. War devastates the dependencies of the Imperial Crown. Do everything to make peace possible. Hold Russia and Prussia to the minimum on which they agreed. If the restoration of Illyria stands in the way of Napoleon's acceptance, give it up. The question of war will be decided when it arises.⁶²

The negotiations could not begin however, until a very serious difficulty had been removed. When Metternich agreed at Dresden on June 30 that a Congress should assemble at Prague, he pledged Russia and Prussia to a step far in advance of their intentions. The

plan agreed to by them in Opocno and Gitschin had involved the sending of representatives to the latter city. These "negotiators" (the word sneered at by Sir Charles Stewart) were to be accredited only to the Emperor of Austria, in order to avoid any appearance of a "Congress." Metternich, however, had not only arranged to a "congress", but had agreed to prolong the armistice. It may well be imagined that the announcement of this assumption of responsibility was met with vehement protest. The Austrian minister was upbraided for committing a breach of the treaty of Reichenbach. Not until July 26, at Neumarkt, did the sovereigns accept the extension of the armistice and only after repeated assurances from Metternich that Austria would go to war if Napoleon refused the terms.⁶³

The "negotiators" now assembled at Prague, and the "congress" opened. But there was no Congress. All but the last few days were filled by a controversy in writing over the form of negotiations. Metternich was virtually committed to a form before the matter had been broached at Prague. His agreement with Russia and Prussia at Opocno, as well as the Austrian position generally, demanded that the bases not be proposed in a congress but through the mediator. The Teschen Congress (1779) was pointed out as a precedent for the adoption of that manner of negotiating.⁶⁴

Russia and Prussia stood for this way because it did not commit them so thoroughly to a peace, while it was calculated to bring Austria to war by compromising her neutrality. Metternich, himself, insisted on it, in order to retain his control of affairs. He was on guard to prevent the signing of any separate treaties behind his back. France did not want the proposed form for reasons exactly

opposed to those of Metternich.

Meanwhile, a growing sentiment for war began to spread through official circles in Vienna. In the middle of July, Francis had met Alexander in Bohemia, very secretly, and talked over the possibility of war. The Russian Emperor seems to have been satisfied with the results of his interview.⁶⁵ On July 27, Count Hardenberg wrote Munster that the Austrian tone had strengthened considerably. Metternich declared that war would open on August 10, without any quibbles if Napoleon refused to be reasonable. The Emperor Francis placed less emphasis on pleadings for peace, and watched interestedly the completion of Austrian armaments.⁶⁶ The new enthusiasm spread itself throughout the Empire. Hungary, increased by a third, her regiments of Hussars. This was done voluntarily, without the Diet's having been convened. In the last days of July, Metternich entrusted the advance preparation of a war manifesto to Gentz, who had become one of his secretaries.⁶⁷

The Austrian minister continued to warn Caulaincourt, that with the ending of the armistice on August 10, chances of peace would vanish. Napoleon replied through his representatives on August 5 that no termination of the negotiations had been set at Dresden, that the agreement had been to prolong them until peace was made.⁶⁸ He accused Austria of being partial, of having presented herself as "arbitrator" instead of "conciliator".⁶⁹

Nevertheless, the firm attitude now being taken by Austria must have convinced Napoleon of that power's determination to perform what she promised. On the heels of the uncompromising despatches of August 5, Caulaincourt came to Metternich to make a communication which was to be kept secret even from Narbonne. What did Austria

mean by peace; and what were the conditions on which France agreeing to them - she would either ally herself with that power or remain neutral.⁷⁰ Napoleon still retained the idea that Austria could be bought, if only he bid high enough. Austria could be bought, but only with a stable peace and an assurance of equilibrium.

Metternich presented the French questions to Francis. Stadion, the head of the war party in Austria, had been urging the Emperor in his letters, not to restrict himself to the four points, but to seize the opportunity of securing the frontiers, and gaining independence for Germany. Stadion seems to have exercised considerable influence on the Austrian sovereign, and doubtless the advice given had some material effect upon the decision.⁷¹ Perhaps, Metternich decided the question. At least on August 8, Caulaincourt was handed an ultimatum of Austrian conditions. They included not only the four *sine qua non* - dissolution of Duchy of Warsaw, restoration of Dantzic to Prussia and of Illyrian provinces to Austria, independence of Hanseatic cities, but the two which Metternich had declared advisable but not indispensable - dissolution of the Confederation of the Rhine, and reconstruction of Prussia as in 1806.

A loophole was provided in the preamble through which Austria might escape from the consequences of Napoleon's acceptance as against Allied rejection afterwards. The Emperor announced these bases, "knowing by former confidential explanations what the courts of Russia and Prussia seemed (*paraissent*) to regard as conditions of a pacific arrangement." Metternich wrote to Stadion that the ultimatum would not be accepted by Napoleon. He thought it a good

point, that the character of the communication forbade publication of the terms, since he had insisted that the answer to Caulaincourt's secret proposal be kept equally secret. This stipulation was included to prevent publication to the French nation, rather than from fear of allied knowledge. Metternich informed Austett, the Russian envoy, and Count Hardenberg, the Prussian representative, of the proceedings, on the day before the ultimatum was presented.⁷³ The promise of secrecy, however, did not prevent Napoleon from exaggerating Austria's terms. He wrote to Jerome, and to General Lavary on August 9, that the Emperor Francis demanded Venetia.⁷⁴

The ultimatum had reached Napoleon that very day. In a conversation with Bubna he offered to dissolve the Duchy of Warsaw, make Dauszig a free state, and give Illyria and Dalmatia without Trieste, to Austria.⁷⁵ But he wrote to Jerome that the armistice would probably be terminated on the eleventh or twelfth, and that Austria would declare war.⁷⁶

The report of Napoleon's conversation with Bubna reached Prague on the 11th, but the French negotiators had received their passports; and the "Congress" of Prague was dissolved. Austria declared war at midnight on August 10. Public announcement was made on the 17th.⁷⁷ This paper was drawn up by Gentz, though probably a reflection of Metternich's ideas.⁷⁸ It reviewed the whole course of Austrian actions: the attempt to prevent the war between France and Russia; the neutrality of Austria, finally resulting in an alliance with France in order to bring her to reason; the long effort for peace; Napoleon's evidence disregard of the necessity of "repose" in Europe; and the decision of the Emperor Francis to enter the war to fight for the guarantee of peace under the aegis of an association of

independent states."

Metternich had now joined Russia and Prussia in a war against France; but what of Austrian relations with England? The British diplomats received no official announcement of Austrian mediation, until Hardenberg transmitted Stadion's note of May 16, to Sir Charles Stewart on May 18.⁸⁰ All the Allies were dissatisfied with the bases in this note, but the English representatives openly denounced Austria.⁸¹ They always regarded her with suspicion. Castlereagh wrote to Metternich on June 30, to ask him for a point blank declaration of the Austrian position. Wessenberg had been sent no instructions for some time.⁸²

When the English minister received from Cathcart a résumé of the Russian bases proposed in answer to Austria at Würschen on May 16, he prepared an instruction on the English view of a satisfactory peace. This project, despatched to Cathcart on July 5, emphasized the British interests - Spain, Portugal, Sicily, Sweden - as sine quibus non, having been pledged by the crown. Insistence was placed on the independence of Holland, restoration of the Hanoverian dominions and the reconstruction of Austria and Prussia. Restoration of Germany, Switzerland, and Italy was strongly urged. The question of maritime rights was not to be considered in any peace.⁸³ England would not accept Russian mediation in the American war.

It may be readily seen how far below these demands, were the Austrian four points, agreed to by Russia and Prussia, nearly a month before this despatch was written.

After announcing English conditions, Castlereagh sent off instructions on July 13, 14 to accept Austrian mediation for a peace

on the bases of the July 5 despatch. England, he said would cede maritime possessions in the event that proper bases were arranged on the continent, but no particular would be made known until such bases were assured. Again he emphasized the necessity of "peremptorily excluding from general negotiations every maritime question."⁸⁴

The English acceptance of mediation was withheld from Metternich's knowledge, on the request of Alexander who believed that war was now inevitable.⁸⁵ Furthermore, he wished it to be inevitable, and the announcement of British acceptance might weaken Austria's sentiment for war. England had no representative at Prague. Jackson was anxious that there should be one during the negotiations; "not with the hope of being able to effect a peace, but to prove to the world that peace is not practicable...."⁸⁶ Austro-British relations during this period were confined to some conversations between Cathcart and General Nugent on subsidies. Metternich refused to sign a convention, on the grounds that it would compromise Austria's position in the mediation.⁸⁷

A supposed treaty of Prague on July 27, allusions to which, Branchi included in his storia documentata della diplomazia Europea in Italia⁸⁸ never existed. The letter from Metternich to Castlereagh of May 26, 1814, in which references are given to this document, is a fabrication, as Fournier has adequately proved.⁸⁹

The Austrian diplomat, giving up hopes of a general peace when England refused his offers, put all subsequent efforts into obtaining a continental settlement. On Aug. 2, Jackson wrote to Stewart that he believed the Allies would accept a "brilliant"

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continental peace. Stewart, returning to headquarters as the negotiations in Prague came to an end, learned of the "eventual" convention at Reichenbach, which had been kept secret from England. He was immeasurably shocked at the duplicity which would allow such a treaty, after the subsidy agreements of June 14. When he learned from Hardenberg that Metternich had been responsible for withholding knowledge of the treaty, the English diplomat's distrust of the Austrian minister was intensified to a degree comprehensible only in the light of Stewart's violent nature.

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The Prague episode was closed, but Maret wrote to Metternich on August 18. Austria's duplicity, he said, had rendered conciliation impossible. Without her, peace between the belligerents would have easily been arranged. France now proposed to open a real Congress at some neutralized spot, where all powers, great and small, should meet together and frame the peace of Europe. Negotiations were to have no effect on the fighting, which was to go on at will.

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Despite the insulting tone of this missive, Metternich answered in his usual tone that the proposal had been communicated to the other powers; that Austria had now no "object of interest" except in common with her Allies. The Austrian minister never refused an offer to negotiate peace.

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CHAPTER V.

AUSTRIA AS MODERATOR OF THE COALITION - THE MARCH TO THE RHINE

Austria had now ranged herself definitely on the side of the coalition against France. The fundamental difficulties in the way of settlement in Europe were by no means effaced by this move. France must still be saved from oblivion; Russia's ambitions curtailed; the rising tide of militarism in Prussia kept within bounds; England's maritime supremacy reduced to reasonable proportions.

The first task was the breaking of French military despotism. Metternich was willing to fight until France would make an adequate peace, and no longer. Napoleon must be forced back over the Rhine. This was the first objective. On September 9, separate treaties were signed by Austria with Russia and Prussia at Toeplitz, with the express purpose of the reestablishment of a just equilibrium of Powers. Mutual guarantees were given for the possessions belonging to each of the three countries. The Duchy of Warsaw question was to be arranged by friendly agreement.¹ No mention was made of Spain, Italy, Holland, or Sweden, the chief British interest in a continental Scheme. English diplomats found the treaties most unsatisfactory.²

Before the month was over, Napoleon made another effort to separate Austria from the Allies. General Flahaut came under a flag of truce to the Austrian headquarters, offering peace. Metternich was not to be enticed into any truce. Evidently Napoleon failed to comprehend the breadth of the Austrian foreign policy. The French envoy returned to headquarters with the answer that a partial peace

was out of the question; but that French ouvertures had been forwarded to England.³

In September, Aberdeen arrived. Castlereagh had felt the need of an English representative at Austrian headquarters, and early in August had drawn up extensive instructions for the envoy. Metternich was to be informed that the British desire to confine France to the Pyrenees, the Alps and the Rhine, was as strong as ever, but that a less exacting peace would be agreed to, if the struggle grew too difficult. England wished to see Austria resume preponderance in North Italy as a barrier against France. Venice should belong to Austria. Metternich was to be given cognizance of the Bentirck negotiations in Italy. Murat should find compensation in the center of Italy if Naples was given back to the Bourbons. In a separate and secret despatch, Aberdeen was given authority to accede to the wish of Metternich if Murat made the retention of his throne the sine qua non of his cooperation. A convention might be signed⁴ subject to ratification.

Aberdeen came too late to influence the Anglo-Austrian treaty then being negotiated. This agreement of October 3 was the barest kind of an alliance, guaranteeing continuation of the war and no separate peace.⁵ The English diplomats, with the exception of Aberdeen, continued to be suspicious of Austria's good faith. George Jackson wrote in his diary in September that "Some secret influence is believed - and not without reason - to be still working in Boney's favour in the Austrian Cabinet."⁶ On October 6 after the alliance treaty had been signed, he still had it "on undoubted authority,"⁷ that agents of Marie Louise were near Emperor Francis. Metternich

had now taken Aberdeen into his confidence and with all the charm of his engaging personality soon enthralled the young man completely.⁸

But the curtain now went up on the second piece in what Herbert Fisher has called the trilogy of Napoleon's fall. The battle of Leipsig heralded the turning point not only of Napoleon's campaign beyond the frontiers of France, but a crisis in the policies of the Austrian cabinet. On the second of the four days which marked the progress of the battle, Napoleon released the Austrian-General, Merveldt, taken prisoner during the fighting, and sent him to Metternich with proposals for peace. England should receive Hanover; Poland, Spain, and Holland should be made independent; Italy united under a ruler of its own; the north German coast surrendered; all states of the Confederation who voluntarily deserted, released from French control.⁹ For this Austria was not ready yet. "Wir werden am Rhein antworten," wrote Metternich to Hudelist.¹⁰ Leipzig forced Napoleon to retire. The way to the Rhine lay open. When the news of the battle reached Prague on October 21, 22, Te Deums were sung in the churches, and Gentz as censor put out "extra" editions of the Prague newspapers.¹¹

Napoleon's allies were now deserting him. The rats were leaving the ship. On October 8, Bavaria had signed an alliance treaty with Austria at Ried, with the principal objects of dissolving the Confederation of the Rhine, and assuring the independence of Bavaria.¹² Very liberal, too liberal terms as it proved later, were agreed to by Austria on the boundary settlement. The Bavarian troops deserted Napoleon on October 14. The Saxons on the last day of Leipsig.¹³ Metternich was negotiating with Murat, having learned from Aberdeen of

his secret instructions almost at once. Castlereagh had intended this capitulation as a last resort, but Aberdeen was too naive to resist the seasoned blandishments of the Austrian diplomat.¹⁴

Immediately after the completion of the Anglo Austrian treaty at Toeplitz, Metternich returned to Prague. He was there from October 4 to 7, parleying with Cariatì, Murat's representative, and with Count Bernstorff, envoy of the King of Denmark. After Leipzig, Murat obtained leave to go and look after affairs in his kingdom.¹⁵

Cathcart, English ambassador at Russian headquarters, received a long despatch from home, on the second day after Leipzig. Castlereagh was determined to bind the Allies together in a general alliance treaty. The ease with which the Coalition powers, deserted British aims in June prior to the acceptance of Austrian mediation, still lingered in his memory. In his instructions to Cathcart (dated September 18) he declared that Austria was virtually pledged to fight for the Würschen bases of May 16. He wished a general alliance treaty with a provision for after peace cooperation against Napoleonic ambition. A secret article should stipulate the bases put forward originally by Austria, plus the Wurschen bases which added Spain and Holland, plus the British Treaty agreements, Sweden, Naples. How little Castlereagh understood of the continental situation may be learned from his expectation that the treaty might be ready in time for the opening of Parliament in the first weeks of November.¹⁶ But he saw the shadow of one difficulty when he talked to Lieven in London. He sent off an immediate despatch to Cathcart, warning him that maritime rights could not be the subject of general peace.¹⁷

Cathcart found Alexander quite willing to enter into this alliance and assured Castlevagh that Metternich was "free from all jealousy" on the question. "Therefore," he wrote, "I expect great aid from him in surmounting all apprehensions of engaging in an offensive and defensive alliance to maintain doubtful questions....." ¹⁸

The Austrian minister was busy in his own right. The Topelitz agreements had set the goal of operations at the Rhine, and that goal had now been reached. ¹⁹ At Frankfort, Metternich was determined to open peace negotiations. A half dozen reasons stood behind this determination. These reasons may be summed up in that many words: Alexander, Stein, "Prussianism," maritime rights, stability. The relations between Stein and Alexander gave him grounds for uneasiness. Stein, it was, who had persuaded Alexander to advance beyond the Vistula. Stein it would be, who advocated the march to Paris. Stein had been appointed president of the German Provisional Administrative Commission, despite the protest of Metternich. ²⁰ This commission ruled the conquered German territories, under the direct supervision of Hardenberg. In this capacity it became the executive head of Saxony upon which land Prussia already looked with covetous eyes. ²¹ Metternich told Aberdeen in the last days of October, that he would ²² never agree to the incorporation of Saxony in Prussia. More than that, he had no intention of putting down one great military power with ideas of imperializing Europe, in order to set up another to the north of him.

Metternich feared the Tugenburg with its strong militaristic caste, even more than Prussian dynastic ambitions. He found nothing in a nationalistic spirit bent seemingly on a "war of extermination,"

on the plundering and destruction of Paris. Such barbarism seemed only the old militaristic ferocity of Prussia, now spread broadcast by propaganda.²³ Stein kept the German princes waiting in his ante-room for hours and treated them with such hauteur and arrogance that they were completely alienated. But the thought of a pugnacious and fanatic Germany was made more abhorrent to Metternich by the evident close attachment between Alexander and the new forces. The Russian bogie still lurked in the background. England was seeking a general alliance treaty with peace bases entirely excluding maritime and no stipulation of England's intention to give up her colonial conquests. One after another of Metternich's ideas on a new and stable organization of Europe were being lost sight of by the different parties to the coalition. The importance of keeping France intact and undespilled was never more apparent.

On October 27, Metternich wrote to Schwarzenberg that Alexander had agreed to peace offers. "We are sending St. Aignan to the Emperor Napoleon with a reply to the ouvertures which he made through Merveldt."²⁵ Aberdeen was informed of the decision, but his British colleagues were not. Metternich pledged Aberdeen not to tell them. "The excuse," says Professor Webster, "was the extreme secrecy of the proceedings; but Metternich could not but know that Stewart at least was likely²⁶ to take a very different tone to Aberdeen's." The young Englishmen wrote home on October 29, to tell Castlereagh of the impending communication with Bonaparte, to be kept secret in order to give rise to little speculation on Allied intentions.²⁷ Metternich had taken as assent from England, a letter written in September by Castlereagh²⁸ in answer to the proposals made by Maret, duke of Bassano in August.

St. Aignan, who had been held as a prisoner, was released on parole and brought to Frankfort. On November 8, Metternich held an extended conversation with him, explaining the pacific viewpoint on a number of difficult questions.²⁹ Francis would not accept the title of Emperor of Germany. The Napoleonic dynasty was to be undisturbed, England being much more moderate on that point than was supposed. The plans for peace included the setting of just limits to the power of England, and the possession by France of all the maritime liberty which she had a right to claim, other powers of Europe the same. England was ready to make Holland independent. Indemnities would be settled fairly.

The next day, St. Aignan drew up in the presence of Metternich and Nesselrode a formal note of the peace proposals. In outline, the scheme for settlement was as follows: At Prague Austria had thought that a continental peace might be arranged, but since the intentions of all the Allies and of England had been learned, it was useless "to think of a negotiation which does not have as first principle, a general peace." France must retain its integrity as a nation, within its natural limits, the Rhine, the Alps and the Pyreneese. The independence of Germany was a sine qua non. An independent Spain must be reestablished under the ancient dynasty. In Italy, Austria must have an adequate frontier, which should be the object of negotiation, as should the affairs of Piedmont. The Kingdom of Italy should be governed independetly, without the influence of France or any other principal power. Holland ought to be independent, but negotiations should decide.

"England was ready to make the greatest sacrifices for a peace

founded on these bases, and to recognize the liberty of commerce and of navigation, to which France might rightfully pretend."

According to St. Aignon's report to his government, Aberdeen arrived at Metternich's house during the conversation and listened to a reading of the note. He asked to hear it again. When St. Aignon had finished he observed that the expression "liberty of commerce and navigation" was very vague. St. Aignon replied that he had written what Metternich had dictated. Metternich then offered to change the wording, and wrote merely that "England would make the greatest sacrifices for a peace founded on these bases." St. Aignon thought this phrase as vague as the other, and Aberdeen agreed. The English diplomat expressed himself as willing to keep the original wording since he could give assurance that indeed England "was ready to make the greatest sacrifices."

With this document, St. Aignon departed for French headquarters. Cathcart, who learned immediately of the affair, wrote to Castlereagh that he thought the proposal would be "not inconsistent" with British objects.³⁰ But before many days had passed a violent quarrel broke out among the English ministers.

Bassano replied to the Allied overture, from Paris on November 16, suggesting that Mannheim be neutralized for the meeting of the Congress.³¹ Metternich replied on the 25th. He declared that France must accept the bases proposed through St. Aignon before the Allies would consent to enter into negotiation.³² In the meantime Aberdeen, perhaps fearful already of having compromised the English stand, addressed a note to Metternich protesting on an allusion in Bassano's note to the settlement of maritime rights. Metternich's

reply was considered satisfactory. He agreed that Aberdeen had not said England would disturb maritime rights. The young Englishman sent both notes home, in order to vindicate his position.³³

Sir Charles Stewart, envoy at Prussian headquarters, and his assistant George Jackson, were both convinced that Aberdeen had been taken in by Metternich. Jackson wrote in his diary on November 23, "Never was anybody more completely bitten than he is by Metternich."³⁴ Three days later Stewart and Jackson visited Hardenberg. Sir Charles demanded an explanation of the maritime rights business. Hardenberg refused to discuss the matter. "Lord Aberdeen has approved all," he said. His own mouth, by promise to Metternich, was shut until tomorrow! It is well to note that this conversation took place on November 26, the day after Metternich's reply to Bassano. The next day, the letter would be well on its way. If the French accepted the St. Aignan bases, England would find it more difficult to withdraw, when her allies were committed to peace.

The next day, Stewart visited Hardenberg again. "A most violent breeze, to speak euphoniously, between him and Sir Charles, who threatened to ask for his passports," Jackson recorded in his diary. Hardenberg threw the blame for the whole affair upon Metternich.³⁶ Stewart in a great rage, wrote off to Castlereagh.³⁷

On the last day of November, allied ministers were to be entertained at an elaborate dinner. Stewart told Jackson he could not "face it." "It would really cost him an effort to give a cordial reception to Metternich." Jackson assured him that "Metternich could and would, when it suited him, make it difficult for any one

to give him other than a cordial reception." After dinner, Jackson talked with Hardenberg who was inclined to take Metternich's part. The Austrian minister had read him a comprehensive paper on the real basis as stated in conversation with St. Aignon; Hardenberg acknowledged however that it "was not calculated" to satisfy the British view. Aberdeen admitted that if Bonaparte agreed to the bases, negotiations would commence. Jackson found his note to Metternich "as weak" as the Austrian answer was "unsatisfactory."

What was the purpose of Metternich's action in the St. Aignon mission? Today it seems clear. In Metternich's self addressed instructions as minister to the Court of Dresden in 1801; in his first offer as mediator in the summer of 1810, in all the proposals for a general pacification, which he advanced through the year 1813; may be found the conviction that a durable peace in Europe must include a European settlement of the maritime rights question. Furthermore, English colonial preponderance must be reduced or the balance in Europe could never be maintained. Now Castlereagh was pressing for an alliance treaty, which would exclude the maritime rights question. Metternich saw a last chance to place this matter in the rank of negotiable objects. If Napoleon accepted a general peace including this as one of the bases, England could withdraw only by separating herself from her allies. In order to gain time, he pleaded Aberdeen to secrecy with the belief that the young man could be hoodwinked long enough at least to give France time to commit herself to peace. Anyone so careful in expression as Metternich, would never have allowed St. Aignon to depart with a note containing a misstatement of such an important detail. But Metternich's hopes

for European arrangement of maritime law were destined never to be fulfilled.

Metternich's influence was now at its height in Allied councils, and that influence was directed definitely toward a moderate peace. He convinced the Czar that it was best not to carry war into France. Alexander was anxious not to lose the influence which he had acquired as the liberal "savior" of Europe. Metternich played skillfully upon that string.³⁹ Hardenberg and Aberdeen were both obedient to his⁴⁰ plans.

"Moderation in our political attitude, and force in our military measures," was Metternich's idea of the ideal point of view.⁴¹ Thus he wrote to Wessenberg on November 26. Even then Metternich, in pursuance of this ideal, was preparing a manifesto to the French nation.⁴² On the first day of December, it was made public in the name of the coalition. "The allied powers," it announced, "are not waging war on France, but on that preponderance....which, to the misfortune of Europe and of France, has too long been exercised by the Emperor Napoleon, beyond the limits of his empire." This, certainly, was a true statement of Metternich's point of view. How much it was that of the other Allies, will be seen later. "The allied sovereigns," it continued, "wish France to be great, strong, and happy, because a great and strong French power is one of the fundamental bases of the social edifice." And furthermore, "the powers guarantee to the French empire, an extent of territory which France never knew under her kings....." This was the Metternichian⁴³ attitude in its pure expression.

Metternich was prepared for criticism of the declaration.

He sent a copy to Hudelist in Vienna. "You will observe our usual moderation again in this document," he wrote. "Perhaps the reproach⁴⁴ of too great moderation may be made against it by the Enrages." He was not mistaken. Sir Charles Stewart found it "much too tame",⁴⁵ though Jackson approved its tone. When the latter arrived in England in December on a special mission, he found Castlereagh also dissatisfied. On his return he was instructed to urge on the part of the British government that part of the proclamation be reconsidered. He was to declare that "it would be highly objectionable to give France an assurance that whatever may be the conduct of the French nation or its Government, it is nevertheless to be exempt from the⁴⁶ ordinary consequences of an unsuccessful war." The English minister evidently had in mind the clause guaranteeing to France a greater extent of territory than under her kings. This might mean cutting into the frontier which England planned for Holland and the Netherlands.

Meanwhile at Paris, Caulaincourt, Duke of Vicenza, one of the leaders in the peace party, had succeeded Maret, Duke of Bassano as minister of foreign affairs. On December 2, he wrote to Metternich to announce the acceptance of the bases outlined in the St. Aignon⁴⁷ note. Metternich replied on the 10th that his letter was being sent to the other allies, and expressed the hope that negotiations⁴⁸ would begin very shortly.

Metternich was now most anxious to open peace negotiations. On December 4, Cathcart reported to Castlereagh that there was "some intention of sending Pozzo di Borgo to England to explain the ideas of this court in regard to some important arrangement which, it is thought; it would be most desirable to settle before a general peace."⁴⁹

The intention was carried out, and Pozzo left on the evening of the 6th bearing with him Caulaincourt's acceptance of the St. Aignan
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bases.

The hot headed Stewart was pleased to consider this mission as an insult to the British representatives at Frankfort. He despatched Jackson to London on December 8. Jackson was to go by a short route and arrive in England in time to warn Castlereagh of the dark motives
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behind Pozzo's journey.

Though the mission was ostensibly sent by Alexander, Metternich was behind it. The motive for it all, reveals the innate practicability of the Austrian minister's mind. The hue and cry over the maritime rights matter had finally convinced him that England would never come into a negotiation in which those rights were questioned. Therefore he promptly forsook his old idea sacrificing to the advantages of a prompt peace. But on the cession of colonial conquests as shall be shown presently, he was still intent on England's declaring herself. He wished to leave no loophole through which one power might withdraw from the negotiation. A discussion of the conquests belongs properly to the story of the general alliance negotiation, and will be so treated.

The conclusions which Metternich had now reached, may be best stated in the text of a letter which he sent to Wessenberg in London, by Pozzo di Borgo.

"We believe that only in the form of a congress, can a matter as complicated as the next peace, be brought to a happy end. We propose then to England to declare jointly with us, that in order to eliminate from the principal matter all petty intrigues and jealousies,

we believe it obligatory to insist to France on the opening of negotiations in the form of preliminary conferences." England, France, Russia, Austria and Prussia were to be admitted to the preliminaries. There should be arranged the bases and mode of a definitive pacification to which the representatives of the other powers were to be invited.

"You will moreover make explicit assurances that we are desirous of seeing excluded from the future negotiation all moral questions, ... which certainly will be excluded by France also, if she is truly desirous for peace, and we shall reserve for the next war discussion on the question of searching vessels, and the rights of the flag."⁵²

During the month of November, Austria made treaties with many of the lesser German states. The King of Wurtenbourg, the Grand-Duke of Hesse-Darmstadt, the Prince of Nassau, the Elector of Hesse-Cassal, pledged adhesion to the Grand Alliance, and promised to lend themselves "to all cessions in Germany demanded by future arrangements calculated to maintain the strength and independence of that country." The Confederation of the Rhine was,⁵³ of course, to be dissolved.

Parallel with the progress of the parleys with France, may be traced the advance of a negotiation within the circle of the coalition. This negotiation, already referred to, had as its object the foundation of a general alliance. The English representatives at Frankfort had received instructions to arrange such an alliance, on October 20. It will be remembered that Cathcart found Alexander willing and counted strongly on Metternich's acquiescence.

But in November, Cathcart found in Alexander a new reluctance

to sign. He preferred a separate subsidy treaty. On being pressed by Cathcart, he expressed the conviction that in such an alliance treaty there should be included a stipulation on the cession of English maritime conquests. He waived the question of rights and was quite willing to withdraw from any appearance intervention in the American war. But he was rather decided on stipulation of English conquests to be ceded. ⁵⁴ Cathcart was puzzled and disappointed by the Czar's change of front, but he assured Castlereagh ⁵⁵ that Prince Metternich would assist. This was on November 24. Two days later Jackson wrote in his diary: "At the moment we were expecting the signature of the general alliance, Lord Aberdeen, who declared that he would get it done in forty-eight hours, has allowed Metternich to persuade him that it will be better to send ⁵⁶ the whole thing to London!"

On November 29, Cathcart received a notice from Stewart that Prussia was ready for the alliance. Aberdeen said Metternich was also willing to sign. Cathcart had now learned that Alexander had sent off instructions to the Russian ambassador in London to settle the matter of subsidies and conquests by a separate article supplementary to the treaty of Reichenbach. The envoy to the Russian court hurried to tell Alexander of the acquiescence of the other allies. The Emperor said he must talk to Metternich before making a decision.

On December 5, Alexander told Cathcart that he had talked to Metternich and now believed that an alliance could be arranged at Frankfort instead of in London. Cathcart went with Aberdeen to see Metternich and found to his surprise that the Austrian diplomat had pronounced views on the question. The subsidies should be

stipulated in the treaty; England should declare herself on the colonial cessions, especially on the ones which she was resolved to retain; Austria could not admit Norway into the treaty because of the negotiations now pending with Denmark.⁵⁷

The discussion continued through December. In a conference on December 9, Aberdeen, (always over careful of Metternich's reputation) complained that Nesselrode took much the stronger tone on the cessions; that the Austrian diplomat was not willing like Prussia to desert her ally Russia.⁵⁸ But Cathcart's eyes were now opened to the true state of Allied opinion. He wrote Castlereagh that Alexander would not decide without the others agreeing. "Although Prince Metternich attributes the opposition to Russia, he is the only person who is eloquent in supporting that opposition; and it neither occurred to the Emperor nor to Count Nesselrode till after consultation with him."⁵⁹

An examination of the course of this entire negotiation reveals clearly Metternich's policy. His plan for a general pacification included both the cession of colonial conquests and the settlement of the maritime rights difficulty. He had no nationalistic interest in either of these points, outside of Austria's dependence on a stable equilibrium in Europe. The cession of colonies was desirable as a means of trading, in the peace settlements. But Metternich was already distrusted by England. His strenuous insistence on both anti-English propositions would brand him as pro-French in the suspicious eyes of the British envoys at Frankfort. Therefore, he used Russia to advance one of the two. The traditions of his royal forbears, would naturally prepare Alexander to be the

champion of maritime rights. But England had already given him a severe snubbing on the offer to mediate a peace with America. British ministers would always be cautious with a descendant of the Great Catherine.

Therefore, Metternich assumed the role which normally would have been Alexander's, and while striving to insert maritime rights into the negotiations, used the Russian Emperor to pull the colonial cessions out of the fire. When he gave up his position on maritime rights, he could come out into the open to fight for colonial cessions. Such, it is believed, was the reasoning behind his actions.

In London, Castlereagh still waited in vain for the alliance treaty which he had expected to present to Parliament at the beginning of November. He told Lievin that England saw no reason why she should stipulate the conquests to be ceded. ⁶⁰ On December 22, Castlereagh wrote Cathcart that he, himself, was coming to the ⁶¹ continent. The disciple of Pitt was determined to have an alliance. While the opening of peace negotiations waited upon England's acceptance of the Caulaincourt letter, the coalitionists at Frankfort were struggling with a new perplexity. In the declaration of December 1, they had announced that hostilities would not cease until peace was actually in the making. Should the armies advance beyond the Rhine? That was the question which continued to be ⁶² discussed throughout November.

Three plans were presented. The Austrian general, Duka, wished to take up an intrenched position on the Rhine. This would suit Metternich best as a political attitude, but it left Napoleon free to organize his forces preparatory to more war. The Prussian

general, Guersenu, advocated crossing the Rhine between Strasburg and Mainz. The Silesian army was to enter into Belgium. The third plan was that of Schwarzenberg, the commander-in-chief of the Allied forces. It involved a more extensive and more thorough plan of operations, designed to force peace on Napoleon by strategy rather than battle. Switzerland could not be left open for a French dash into Italy. Schwarzenberg, therefore, advised that the Austrian army advance through Switzerland to connect on the left with the other Austrian army advancing through upper Italy, and with Wellington on the Spanish frontier. Wrede, the Bavarian general, was to advance on the middle Rhein. Blücher's army would cross the Rhine at Bonn and Cologne in order to connect with Bervadotle in coming into Holland from northern Germany.

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The Austrian government hesitated between the plans of Duka and Schwarzenberg. On account of the manifesto, it was decided to advance. Lebzeltern was sent to Bern in the middle of November to learn the disposition of the Swiss people toward the Allied cause. Metternich felt that the advancing armies would be "received as friends and liberators." Orders were issued to cross the Rhine at Basle on December 13. But early in December, Alexander announced that he could not see Swiss neutrality violated, and met the protest of Austria by declaring that an advance through that country would be considered as a cause of war with Russia. Metternich was then forced to give in.

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Alexander had promised Madame de Morges, a Swiss governess in the imperial household, that the neutrality of Switzerland would not be violated. Labarpe, once tutor to the Russian Emperor, was also a native of Switzerland, and feared that an invasion would

mean "a return to the old order of things."

After Russia's declaration, conferences were held upon a new campaign plan (December 7, 9, 11). On the 11th, Hardenberg confided to his diary that Alexander seemed "un peu ravise" on Switzerland.⁶⁷ Metternich had learned that troops were being recruited in Switzerland for French armies. This was too much. The Austrian minister departed for Carlsruhe and Fribourg on December 12, and Alexander followed him. Gentz arrived at Fribourg on December 15 and assisted Metternich in his negotiations with the Swiss. Court Senfft, a Saxon diplomat was sent to Bern and later Lebzeltern followed.⁶⁸

On the 17th, Metternich wrote to Alexander that the Canton of Bern had refused to promulgate the act of neutrality and had appealed secretly to Austria for protection. "The reports of M. de Lebzeltern and of Capo d'Istria leave no doubt on the general dispositions of the Swiss peoples. We are overwhelmed here with deputies from all parts who beg us to advance in order that they may pronounce themselves in favor of the Allies."⁶⁹ Alexander replied from Carlsruhe that despite these reports the advance ought not to be made. He said the Allies had agreed not to meddle in Switzerland.⁷⁰ Metternich authorized the entrance, and the Austrian troops proceeded. Alexander was quite angry about it all.⁷¹

Back at Frankfort, Metternich talked for five and one half hours to Alexander. "We finished by embracing," he informed Schwarzenberg.⁷² In describing the interview to the Emperor Francis, the Austrian minister wrote, "The problem remains:- Were or were not the Swiss free under their last Constitution? Er sagt Ja und ich Nein. We banished this question into the great chaos of all philosophical, speculative, hyperbolical rights questions - continental or maritime..."

and decided to meet things as they came.

One can imagine the ease with which Metternich, exercised all his conversational charm to laugh off the matter. But as often happens with clever people, he soothed Alexander as he stood before him, but the sting returned as soon as the poultice had been withdrawn. Nor did it sooth the Czar's vanity when Metternich got from a spy evidence⁷⁴ that Madame de Morges, the Swiss governess, was a French agent. The last protest was stifled but Metternich's cleverness in using this information overreached itself. Alexander felt deeply Metternich's disregard of his wishes. This was the opening breach, soon to be widened by new controversies. The Russian Emperor turned to Stein as his confidant and advisor. This relationship had caused Metternich much concern in the past, and was destined to bring him many anxious moments in the future.

The passage of the troops through Switzerland, made the task of maintaining law and order a delicate one. Metternich was determined not to allow the advance to assume the character of an invasion. Lebzeltern's reports were very satisfactory on this score, but Senfft was severely critized by Metternich for having gone to Berne "with sword in hand." Strict instructions were sent to Schwarzenberg on the matter of maintaining peace. "Charge your militaries," wrote Metternich, "especially Bubna, not to meddle in any local question."⁷⁵

Thus it was, that the Allied troops marched into France. The Austrian troops filed through the passes of the Jura mountains; Blucher crossed the Rhine on New Year's night. A new epoch in the stablization of Europe had begun. As the new year sounded, the curtain rolled up on the third piece in the trilogy of Napoleon's downfall.

CHAPTER VI

AUSTRIA, MODERATOR OF THE COALITION: BEYOND THE RHINE

The year 1813 was a time of real triumph for the politics of Metternich. Beginning with the offer of good offices, passing to the position of a peaceful mediator, from thence advancing boldly to armed mediation, finally casting lot with the coalition when mediation failed, Austria emerged from the diplomatic labyrinth of the times into the light of a new dignity and purpose, Metternich became the dominant personage in Allied councils. At Frankfort he was easily the most important statesman in Europe, both as the dominator of Allied policy and as the spokesman of a diplomacy which argued for peace and stability rather than punishment and revenge.

Austria's immediate object was a pacification which would leave France intact and powerful, capable of acting as a counter-weight in the general equilibrium of Europe. Through his influence upon Russia and Prussia, Metternich won over those powers to the idea of a peace at the Rhine. Upon British policy, he had less effect; but his sway over the youthful Lord Aberdeen very nearly compromised England in a negotiation with which that nation had small sympathy.

But the exigencies of military strategy together with the English hesitancy to agree to the making of peace, forced the crossing of the Rhine. This move was contrary to Metternich's fundamental conception of stability. Beyond the Rhine, he found himself constantly on the defensive; the moderator rather than the dominator of Allied action.

So long as his influence reigned supreme, no immediate necessity for peace existed. But with the very crossing of the Rhine,

difficulties presented themselves which made peace imperative if the Austrian idea of European order was to be realized. After the Swiss disagreement, Alexander turned away from Austrian counsel and thenceforth heeded only the collective advice of Stein, Pozzo di Borgo, and Laharpe. Each of these men, for different reasons, advocated a crusade to Paris and the destruction of the Napoleonic regime. The consummation of such desires would mean the shattering of France as a bulwark against Russian imperialism; the particular danger which Metternich had been fighting from the time of the first peace offers, late in 1812.

Furthermore, though Hardenberg was moderate in his views, King Frederick William was dominated by Alexander - not so much because he believed in the Russian stand, but because his timidity naturally led him to cleave to the strongest and most dangerous entity with which he came in contact.

Despite the difficulties Metternich hoped to bring the war to an end within a short time. He was counting on help from two sources: Napoleon, himself, and Castlereagh, who was coming to the continent in person, to represent Great Britain in the Allied councils. The French Emperor seemed to have accepted the idea of a France confined within limits roughly similar to the old kingdom of the Bourbons. In an address to the Senate, he called upon the provinces by their ancient names, and Schwarzenberg hoped that the military conqueror was now willing to become "King of France" as Talleyrand had advised. Metternich's adaptability is strikingly exhibited in the manner with which he was now depending for help on England, a power which he had attempted to isolate but a few months before.

The Austrian surrender on the matter of maritime rights had paved the way for an understanding between the two ministers. On

January 6, Caulaincourt wrote from Luneville to complain that nothing had been heard about the opening of a Congress, since December 10. "It is difficult to believe," he said, "that Lord Aberdeen had powers to propose bases, without having authority to negotiate." Metternich took advantage of this opportunity to clear himself of any suspicion that he was still disposed to argue the maritime rights question. "Your excellency's suppositions," he wrote to Caulaincourt on January 8, "that Lord Aberdeen proposed the bases, and that he had been furnished with full powers to that effect, are without any foundation." He announced the future coming of Lord Castlereath, and promised further communication as soon as the English minister arrived.³

While waiting for Castlereath's arrival, Metternich instructed Schwarzenberg to advance "prudently". The Austrian minister had no intention of going any farther into France than was necessary or fighting any battles until the Allied position had been clarified. However, Schwarzenberg wrote that there could be no stopping beyond the Rhine until the army had occupied the valley of the Saone and the plateau of Langres.⁴ That region, then, became the Austrian objective. Metternich was resolved not to go beyond it until he was sure of his ground.

He did not put off building his defences against Russia, however, until that time. His first task lay in gaining the support of Prussia for an early peace. It will be remembered that Prussian ambitions in 1812 had been directed toward the acquisition of Poland, and that Alexander had suggested Saxony during the Kalisch negotiations as a better compensation than the Duchy of Warsaw. In November and December of 1813, Hardenberg conferred first with one and then with

another of his continental allies on the affairs of Poland and Saxony.⁵ At the beginning of November, Metternich had told Aberdeen⁶ that Austria would never consent to Prussian acquisition of Saxony. But in January, the necessities of a strong check on Russia, led him to give in to Hardenberg in order to gain support against Alexander. On January 8, the Prussian minister wrote in his diary - "Metternich accedes to the plan concerning Saxony."⁷ On the very next day, Hardenberg pressed upon Alexander the necessity of allied cooperation⁸ in negotiating a peace. When Hardenberg told Alexander that Metternich "abounded in the same sentiments on the expediency of giving a frontier to Prussia in Saxony", the Russian monarch was inclined to believe that the Chancellor had either mistaken the Austrian minister, or that it was Hardenberg's intention to sound Russia on her attitude toward the Saxon question.⁹ He did not comprehend the purpose of Metternich's move.

The Austrian advance guard reached Langres about January 13. On that day Caulaincourt was invited to go to Chatillon with the expectation that negotiations would soon begin.¹⁰ Metternich was bent upon peace. "All our former engagements are fulfilled," he wrote to Hudelist, "all objects of the coalition were not only attained, but exceeded in the year 1813."¹¹ Furthermore he was rather optimistic about the chances of ending the war. "Who knows," he wrote in another letter to Hudelist, "but what we shall have the peace of the world within fourteen days."¹²

Just at this time, rumors began to circulate concerning Alexander's idea of placing Bernadotte, the king of Sweden, on the French throne. In Metternich's eyes the Russian cloud suddenly loomed blacker than ever. He wrote immediately to Schwarzenberg, to

assure himself that the advance would be retarded at Langres. ¹³

Either peace must be made, or the alliance established on a new basis, he declared. Alexander was departing for the front, he informed

Schwarzenberg. As soon as Castlereagh arrived the English and Austrian ministers would follow the Czar. The matter was to be

settled at once. "I need not tell you," he wrote to Rudelist, "that I am as much embarrassed now with the plenitude of good fortune, as

before with the plenitude of bad." ¹⁴ In this frame of mind, he awaited the arrival of Castlereagh, at Basle. "On the first hours of conversation with him will depend the welfare of the cause," ¹⁵ he predicted.

Alexander, as anxious as Metternich to gain the support of England, had requested through Cathcart that Castlereagh talk with him before seeing the other Allied monarchs. ¹⁶ But the Czar already had hastened on to the front, when the British minister arrived at Basle on January 18.

The hopes which Metternich entertained of assistance from the English minister were amply fulfilled. Castlereagh was a practical person, with an outlook upon affairs in general which agreed with that of Metternich's. He was anxious to be on good terms with Austria, and for that reason had insisted in September that Metternich be informed of England's acceptance of Austrian mediation during the summer of 1813. Hardenberg and Alexander had both objected, but to ¹⁷ no avail.

In the instructions which Castlereagh brought with him to the continent, especial care was taken to outline the British attitude toward Austria. The Emperor Francis was to resume his rule in the Netherlands, but the possession of Belgium in entirety must depend on the success of the war. Austrian preponderance in north Italy was

accepted and urged as a matter of course. England was thus willing to concede Austria much more than that country demanded for herself. Further more, her attitude toward the Bourbons had so far been similar to that of Austria. The Count d'Artois was forbidden to appear at Wellington's headquarters, despite the Prince Regent's outspoken desires for the restoration of the old dynasty in France. 19

Castlereagh felt somewhat as Metternich did, that the overthrow of Napoleon would be accompanied by disturbances highly prejudicial to any hopes of gaining stability in Europe. He wrote in this vein to Liverpool, as he traveled toward Allied headquarters: "...if Bonaparte will give you your own terms, you ought not to risk yourselves and the confederacy in the labyrinth of counter-revolution." 20

At Basle, Metternich lost no time in communicating his own views to the newly arrived minister. The Austrian army would advance not a foot, he said, until Alexander had disavowed all intention of placing Bernadotte on the throne of France. Such a connection between France and Russia, Metternich considered "formidable to the liberties of Europe." 21 Privately, the Austrian minister had difficulty in believing that France would declare for the Bourbons, but with the idea of placating Castlereagh, he seems to have refrained from mentioning his doubts. He even declared that he would prefer the Bourbons to Bonaparte (a rank untruth), "but that he would not interfere to decide, what belonged to France to regulate." 22

"I have had a very full confidential communication with Metternich on the Bourbon question.....", wrote the English minister to Liverpool. "My opinion is that, if we meet this event in our progress as a French measure, Austria will not embarrass it from

any family considerations, and the less so from the dread she feels of Bernadott's elevation; but she will not speculate upon it, or commit herself upon either loose or partial grounds. She will desire always to see the public act, and to frame her decision with reference to its nature and extent..... Metternich seems strongly impressed with the feeling that, to take our terms high against France, we must not encumber ourselves with anything that can bear the appearance of an initiative on such a question on the part of the Allies."²³

All of Metternich's conversation on the Bourbons was designed to gain Castlereagh to the view of not meddling in the dynasty question. The Austrian minister was familiar with the temperament of the people. He knew that if the Allies seemed bent on giving a ruler of their own choice to France, the peace for which he hoped would immediately be out of question. To gain Castlereagh to the side of peace he was even willing to retreat from the Frankfort basis - the Rhine, the Alps and the Pyrenees. The English minister wrote home on January 22, "I am happy to observe that Metternich's geographical notions are improved, and that he will listen at least to modifications of the Rhine in advance of Dusseldorf."²⁵

Metternich, privately, seems to have been convinced that Napoleon would accept peace rather willingly. He therefore, urged that offers be made him so that, if refused, the Allies would then "be perfectly free to follow the line of conduct which the most inveterate hostility may dictate."²⁶

To recapitulate, then, the motives behind Metternich's first efforts after the crossing of the Rhine: he wanted peace and protection against the dubious intentions of Alexander toward France, as immediate necessities for stability. To make sure that peace would

be offered (since he thought it would be accepted) he gave in to Prussia on the Saxon question; in return, Hardenberg pressed Alexander to consent to peace negotiations. He agreed with England on the boundaries of France, and Castlereagh in turn, consented to peace being offered. To make sure that the Bourbon question would not be pressed to the point of embarrassing peace, Metternich assured Castlereagh that Austria would not oppose a restoration but that the French nation must decide for itself.

Armed with Prussian and English support, Metternich was now ready to beard Alexander and force him to a new definition of Alliance objects. He was enthusiastic over Lord Castlereagh. "He has everything; grace, wisdom, moderation. He suits me in every way, and I am convinced that I suit him equally. We shall bolster up the folly of a certain person, and I am no longer uneasy over his deviations." ²⁷ With the prospect for peace, seemingly favorable, Metternich left for the front in good humor. Castlereagh accompanied him.

At Langres, Alexander was eagerly awaiting the British minister. The conversation which had been delayed by the Czar's departure for the front now took place at headquarters. Castlereagh came away from this first interview with some misgivings. He had found the Czar set on the Bernadotte proposal and determined to press on to Paris. "Our greatest danger at present is from the chevalresque tone in which the Emperor Alexander is disposed to push war," he wrote to Liverpool. "He has a personal feeling about Paris, distinct from all political or military combinations." ²⁸

But Metternich was determined that the Frankfort overture should not be abandoned, and declared that retaining Caulaincourt at

Chatillon after moving him from Luneville was not "decorous in point of good faith."²⁹ His anxiety over the status of affairs was increased on January 24 by news of Bernadotte's treaty with Denmark. This turning aside from the general Allied program strengthened Metternich's belief that the Swedish ruler was playing a game contrary to the principles of general stability.³⁰ On January 25, Caulaincourt had written to offer an armistice.³¹ The Austrian minister now earnestly pressed upon Castlereagh the necessity for peace. He confessed complete lack of faith in Alexander's actions in the event that the Allied armies should be defeated in the interior of France. Russia had deserted Austria before, as well as her other allies, he pointed out. The English minister was inclined to share this doubt of Russia's constancy in time of danger.³²

The arguments of the Czar's advisors, in turn, grew stronger in favor of a march to Paris. As Alexander was on the point of hurrying off to the front in order to avoid an open declaration of his intentions, Metternich presented a memoir which demanded an explanation on Alliance objects.³³ Had the objective of the coalition not been reached? Was war being waged to dethrone Napoleon? Were the bases proposed through St. Aignan to be abolished? These were only a few of the most embarrassing questions. Not all were answered, but at a conference of ministers on January 29, a decision was made³⁴ as to five of them.

The question of whether or not the armies should continue to advance was left to the discretion of Schwarzenberg. It was agreed that negotiations with Caulaincourt should be opened. Metternich was authorized to communicate that decision to the French minister.

The bases for the negotiation were easily established. Metternich had already compromised at Basle. At Langres, Castlereagh urged that the Frankfort bases were no longer plausible. The Austrian minister, in the words of Castlereagh, "entered very liberally into the question," but desired "to reserve the consideration of some concession to France beyond the ancient limits the flat country of Savoy... or some territory on the left bank of the Rhine." On the form of negotiation, Metternich had his wish granted. One instruction was to be given to all Allied parties, and it was agreed "that the Russian proposition of denying to France any right to enquire beyond the question of her own limits was too odious a principle to be maintained." Maritime rights were to be excluded entirely from discussion.³⁵

With the answers to these questions, Metternich was forced to be content. Alexander departed for the front on the evening of this conference, refusing to enter into any more discussion. For the time being, a crisis was averted, although Count Munster felt that the reestablishment of good feeling did not go beyond the surface.³⁶

Still left to be arranged were the questions of the precise limits of France, the European settlements outside of France, the state of possession to be adopted in a maritime peace with reference to a continental peace. Poland and Saxony were the thorniest barriers to peace, outside of France. Metternich set himself to bind Castlereagh more firmly to the defence of stability and equilibrium in the peace. If Austria and Prussia, he told the British minister, were to be reconstructed on the 1805 basis and Russia given territorial gains in proportion to her efforts in the war, then everything could be arranged very simply. But, if a system of conquest and aggrandizement was to be adopted, complications were inevitable. For if Russia was

to have Poland, then Austria must have indemnity for Galicia, increases on her frontiers all around, and the Netherlands. This was a wily move on the Austrian diplomat's part. English ambitions for the independence of the Netherlands would be blighted if Austria demanded that territory. Metternich, therefore, urged the necessity of making Russia declare herself on Poland in order that ideas of conquest all around might be removed.³⁷

Meanwhile he was strengthening the Austrian position elsewhere. Gentz at Vienna, was commissioned to make known to the Porte through Karadja, the Hospodar of Wallacia, the Austrian views on stability. "The intention of this court," wrote Gentz, "has never been to simply exchange one danger for another, and to destroy the preponderance of France to prepare or favor that of Russia. The Prince Metternich today, more than ever, looks upon the Ottoman Porte as one of the most essential counter weights in the general equilibrium of Europe."³⁸

At Langres, Metternich had succeeded in persuading the Allies to negotiate for peace. The plenipotentiaries were to assemble in Chatillon on February 3. As has been noted, one set of instructions was to serve all the Allied representatives, who were to negotiate in the name of Europe. Maritime rights were to be excluded from discussion. The limits of France were to be as before the revolution except for reciprocal arrangements outside that territory, and some colonial restitutions by England. European states were to regain their independence. Germany and Italy were to be independent. Spain was to be governed by Ferdinand VII within its old limits. Holland to be free and independent under the sovereignty of the Prince of Orange with an increase of territory and a suitable frontier. France was to abandon all influence outside her own dominions.³⁹

At Allied headquarters in the first days of February, events were moving swiftly toward another crisis. Metternich had learned from Alexander the extent of that monarch's plans for the march to Paris. Once there, according to the Czar's idea, the Allies were to summon the original assemblies to elect a ruler. Metternich thought that this would unchain the Revolution, but Alexander was confident that the presence of the Allied armies would prevent not only an outbreak but the revival of the Republic. Laharpe was to be⁴⁰ entrusted with directing the assembly along proper lines. The strong distaste with which Metternich met this whole proposal may be well imagined. The very idea of a march to Paris was prejudicial to a stable peace. Matters were complicated, according to Metternich, by the fact that Alexander was being urged forward by three distinct parties, "the purely royalistic, the philanthropic, and the Tugendbund, or to speak plainly, the German Jacobins," led respectively by Pozzo⁴¹ di Borgo, Laharpe, and Stein.

Metternich, with characteristic vigor, began at once to summon to summon his forces against Russia. On February 6, he wrote to⁴² Hardenberg from Bar sur Aube, asking that he hasten to headquarters. He wrote to Stadion, then at Chatillon, to hold close to the line taken by Castlereagh who was the only Allied minister present at the negotiation. "The dispositions which I have found here among our allies, whom the late successes have exalted anew, unfortunately, do not give me any certitude that they (the negotiations) will be⁴³ arranged in accordance with our views." But Wrede, he informed Stadion, had assured him that Bavaria would support Austria and that the other princes of South Germany would be equally loyal.

Hardenberg arrived at headquarters on February 9. On the same

day Alexander ordered Razoumofsky the Russian representative at Chatillon to withdraw from any negotiation on peace. ⁴⁴ Metternich immediately sent off a letter to Stadion, urging Lord Castlereagh ⁴⁵ to come to Troyes at once. On the 10th, Metternich received a communication from Caulaincourt, offering an armistice on the basis of the restitution of all territory which had not belonged to France in 1792. To show intention of good faith the French minister also ⁴⁶ offered to make arrangements with regard to certain fortresses.

Bernadotte was arriving at the Rhine. Laharpe had returned ⁴⁷ from Paris with new arguments for a crusade to the French capitol. Alexander was freshly strengthened in his conviction by a letter from Lievin which declared that the Prince Regent's view of peace was not ⁴⁸ that of Castlereagh. The Austrian minister was determined to obtain a clear expression of Allied intention before the invasion had progressed farther.

Castlereagh arrived at Troyes on February 12, and on that day ⁴⁹ Metternich presented a virtual ultimatum to the Allies. A number of questions were presented to the ministers. What answer was to be given to Caulaincourt's proposal for an armistice? Were the Allies to pronounce themselves for Louis XVIII, or continue to leave the dynasty question to the initiative of France? What means were to be employed in order to ascertain with any certainty the real intentions of the French nation as to a change of dynasty? What was the latest time at which it would be known whether or not the nation wished a change of dynasty? If Paris declared for the Bourbons, and Napoleon withdrew at the head of the forces which remained faithful to him, would the Powers then also declare for the Bourbons or conclude peace with Napoleon? What attitude would the Powers meanwhile observe

toward Louis XVIII, the Count of Artois, the envoys at headquarters, the Emigres, and the Royalists in France? What measures would be taken to rule Paris, after it had been conquered? Would a garrison be established there? Who would be entrusted with the command of the city?

A careful examination of these questions will reveal the completeness of Metternich's understanding of the Paris difficulty. He did not expect answers to all the questions but presented many of them to force an appreciation of the hazard of undertaking to make a crusade against France.

The Austrian minister voted on his own questions as a representative of one of the coalition Powers. ⁵⁰ The Emperor of France, he said, had agreed to retire within the limits set by the Allies. The object of the war was thus fully attained. The Powers had agreed that a change of dynasty in France was not to be thought of as a goal of their efforts. Austria did not believe herself possessed of the right to meddle in the governmental forms of an independent state. She did not believe that "an invasion of the enemy, or the presence of foreign troops in or around the capitol would be propitious to the expression of the independent wish of a people," nor did she regard as less impossible an attempt "to attribute to the votes of an assembly of individuals chosen and convoked by foreign powers, the value of an expression of the national desire." The Austrian Emperor was convinced furthermore that the very act of a foreign appeal on the question of the choice of dynasty would be a "most dangerous precedent for all governments."

The Prussian and British answers were in accord with the Austrian expression. Castlereagh placed the characteristic British

emphasis on the bad faith of proposing a negotiation with an existing government while countenancing the claims of a pretender.

"I do not believe," he said, "that the allies can turn back from the principles of their own overtures and render personal, a conflict which was only motivated by a desire for certain conditions."

"I believe consequently," he concluded, "that if the peace which Europe can dictate today to the enemy can be arranged... that peace ought to be signed, in policy and in good faith, unless a national movement makes doubtful Bonaparte's competence to treat and to contract."⁵¹

Nesselrode, though privately in accord with the general Allied view, voted in the name of Russia to push on to Paris. Alexander asked to be charged with the regulation of affairs there, particularly the calling of an assembly of the existing authorities and the principal inhabitants.⁵²

On the 13th, the answers of the allied ministers were made known in conference. Metternich, Castlereagh and Hardenberg signed a protocol in which Alexander was asked to order his plenipotentiary at Chatillon to continue in the negotiation; Metternich was authorized to answer Caulaincourt's letter of February 9, by declaring the Allied willingness to negotiate an armistice if France gave military surety for a general peace by returning to limits as recognized prior to 1792. At the same time instructions were drawn for the arrangement of the armistice.⁵³

Metternich, always anxious to preserve unity in the coalition, meanwhile had attempted to conciliate the Czar's wish to go to Paris, by suggesting that during the armistice the three sovereigns might repair to a locality near Paris for the negotiation of peace. This proposal was communicated by Hardenberg in a letter to the Czar.⁵⁴

However, when the ministers met in conference to hear the Russian response, Nesselrode declared that he had no answer.⁵⁵ The singular aspect of this conference lies in the fact that the Czar had actually refused the proposals in a memoir written by Pozzo di Borgo.⁵⁶ Nesselrode knew of the memoir, and yet declared that he had no answer. It is difficult to account for this proceeding. The most probable explanation would be that he hoped that the Czar might yet be persuaded to treat for peace.

Metternich now proposed to isolate Russia. He urged Prussia to separate from the coalition along with Austria and England, if a peace could be arranged on the chatillon conditions. But King Frederick William was unwilling as yet to desert his Russian ally.⁵⁷ Metternich thereupon threatened to make a separate peace and to withdraw Austrian troops from the field.⁵⁸

At this juncture, news of the reverses experienced by the army of Silesia at Braye, Montmirail and Chateau-Thierry on February 10-13 reached Troyes. As Hardenberg said, it gave "new force to the arguments for a prompt signature of the peace."⁵⁹ Metternich, who now proposed a preliminary peace rather than an armistice, talked with the Czar on the morning of February 14. The new defeats had somewhat cooled Alexander's ardor for an advance. He agreed that if the Allies marched on Paris, then future conduct should be regulated by treaty beforehand. Metternich pressed upon him anew the dangers of calling together a deliberative assembly, urged the renewal of negotiations at Chatillon, and the signing of a preliminary peace in place of an armistice. Alexander largely acquiesced in Metternich's opinion, because he now feared to assume the sole responsibility for continuing war.⁶⁰

The Czar departed immediately for the front after this conversation.

That afternoon, despite the fact that Nesselrode had been left without instructions, the other Allied ministers drew up drafts of a treaty between the coalition powers, and of a preliminary peace with France. The treaty provided that the Allies would recognize the Bourbons if the French nation declared themselves for that family. Louis XVIII, or failing him, the person in whose favor he should abdicate would be accepted as ruler. The preliminary peace with France was in actuality to be an armistice of short duration, and Napoleon was to give over certain strategic fortresses during the⁶¹ period.

The peace project was sent off to Alexander at Pont sur Seine⁶² on February 14, for approval. He replied favorably on the 15th. Castlereagh proposed to make definite Great Britain's willingness to cede certain colonial possessions as compensation to France for parts⁶³ of Belgium and Italy which must be renounced. Concerning the eventual treaty for joint Allied actions at Paris, some misgivings still lurked in the minds of the ministers. For as one of Hardenberg's advisors declared, even if Alexander signed such a⁶⁴ treaty, he would be able to evade it. Metternich undoubtedly had much the same thought and resolved to push the negotiations at Chatillon. He sent on the proposed draft of a peace to Stadion on February 15. France, he said, would undoubtedly raise her tone. after the late successes over Blücher's army but Stadion was to point out to Caulaincourt the inevitable results of a more extended war. The draft was designed to give some play for adjustment in the treaty and was not to be considered an absolute document. In the matter of English concessions Stadion was to be entirely guided by⁶⁵ the opinions of the British representatives. Castlereagh arrived

at Chatillon on February 16, once more ready to oversee the negotiation of a peace with France.

The history of the march from the Rhine to Paris is a wearisome fugue with a theme made up of the struggle of Metternich to moderate the erratic cadenzas of Alexander's thoughts. The treaty among the Allies was not signed. But the Austrian minister might justly have believed that he had averted the Russian efforts to obstruct peace. He had been advised of the ratification by the King of Naples⁶⁶ of a treaty of alliance with Austria. All things pointed toward the possibility of forcing Napoleon to an early peace. The old theme however, was to be repeated anew in a different sense. This time it was excess of timidity rather than intrepidity. The defeats of Blucher had frightened Alexander. Frederick William was always a faint-hearted soul. Schwarzenberg was fearful of famine as the bodies of Allied troops drew closer together. The Russian monarch had little difficulty in convincing himself or the commander-in-chief, that an armistice should be offered. Consequently on February 17 a proposal for the cessation of hostilities was sent off to Marshal Berthier,⁶⁷ Prince de Neuchatel.

When news of this manoeuver reached Chatillon, both Stadion⁶⁸ and Castlereagh wrote heated protests to Metternich. But the Austrian minister was provoked as they over this new embarrassment, at a time when peace seemed in the offing, and hurried off to headquarters. He wrote Stadion that this action would change the whole face of the negotiation. Napoleon would be encouraged to continue the war. He urged the veteran diplomat to stand up as well as possible in the face of the new disadvantage while he, himself, attempted to

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 find a remedy. In answer to the armistice offer, Napoleon proposed the Frankfort bases given to St. Aignan in November of 1813 as the grounds on which an arrangement might be made. 70 Castlereagh, alarmed at the turn of events, left Chatillon on February 20 for Chaumont where Metternich was staying. After some deliberation the Allies finally agreed on March 2, not to prolong the parleys unless the Allied proposals were accepted; on the 3rd even stronger orders were given - the negotiators were to withdraw unconditionally. 71

Meanwhile the ghost of the Polish trouble was stalking abroad again. Czartorysky had arrived at headquarters to visit Alexander. Austrian fears were at once aroused; the more so because a plan to give Alsace to Austria in compensation for Galicia was presented. It was rumored that Czartorysky was to replace Nesselrode as chief minister. 72 Castlereagh considered the arrival of the Polish patriot as most inopportune. He wrote home that together with Metternich he had been laboring to procure an understanding on the point of Poland, but that Alexander had always evaded any definite agreement. Now in the face of reverses, he said, the Czar was anxious for peace, but the Russian actions had spoiled both the peace and any chance of restoring the Bourbons. However, if Russia would declare herself on the Polish matter, he was convinced that Austria would stay with the coalition. 73

Finally Alexander seems to have felt the necessity for retreating on the Polish stand. On February 25, Count Munster wrote to the Prince Regent, "I am happy to be able to add that the Emperor Alexander has at last given a satisfactory reply on Poland, in which he demands only western Galicia which did not belong to Austria." 74 Castlereagh, also, found Alexander more temperate and firm in his

views. "I have had communications with the Princes Czartoryski and Radzivil on the affairs of Poland, and I hope I have succeeded in discrediting their views considering them as in truth a diversion in favor of France...." Czartoryski promised to absent himself from headquarters if his presence created disunion there, and the English minister assured him that it undoubtedly did. ⁷⁵

The first meeting at Chatillon had been held on February 5. Caulaincourt had replied to the Allied terms (agreed on at Langres) by asking that the reciprocal arrangements clause in the proposed treaty be made more specific, that the colonies which England was willing to restore be enumerated. He also desired assurance that if France accepted the terms, the peace would in reality be signed. ⁷⁶ On the 9th, all progress was arrested by the reception of Alexander's order not to negotiate. The subsequent conferences at Troyes, ironed out the immediate difficulties, and Castlereagh returned to Chatillon on the 16th, to superintend the negotiation.

The news of the French victories resulted in a return to the demand on the part of France for the Frankfort basis, as well as for assurances of subsequent provisions for the Kings of Saxony and Westphalia, and the Viceroy of Italy. ⁷⁷ The ill-timed offer of armistice on the 17th could only strengthen France in the new attitude. To bring matters to a definite status, the Allied ministers agreed on new joint instructions to the representatives at Chatillon, as February came to a close. The negotiators were to demand a reply on the project for a preliminary peace. Inquiries were to be made as to the time necessary for the French minister to communicate with his government by the most direct route. If no answer was received ⁷⁸ within that time, the negotiation should be terminated.

Stadion, who was now uneasy over the general situation, found the instructions somewhat inadequate. He wrote in that tone to Metternich, pointing out that negotiators had been given some leeway in accepting the French reply. But how much leeway? He sent a list of possible demands and asked for eventual instructions. ⁷⁹ He was, he said, very weary of the mockery of this "congress." He thought that the departure of the plenipotentiaries, together with a declaration to the French people which laid the blame upon Napoleon would be more effective for peace than "six 'European' diplomats who dance attendance at Chatillon and repeat every eight days a page of sacramental words in conference...." ⁸⁰

Metternich replied to Stadion's request in two despatches, on ⁸¹ March 7, 9. If Caulaincourt offered a counter project, he was to announce that it would be transmitted to the Allied courts. A decision would be made as to whether or not it allowed a reasonable peace, and the answer returned within twenty-four hours. If the French minister's response was an entire acceptance, that also was to be referred to headquarters. If there was no response at all on March 10th (the day set for a reply) a conference was to be called on the 11th. The ministers were to say that their instructions enjoined them to regard the silence of Caulaincourt as a breaking off the negotiations by the French government. If excuses were offered they were to be referred to the Allied courts.

On the 10th, Caulaincourt presented the French answer, but only after much urging; perhaps because he hoped to delay any action until better terms would be conceded by Napoleon. Stadion wrote to Metternich that the response left the opportunity "to break if that ⁸² pleases you, or to remain indefinitely." Almost on the hour of

this writing, Metternich was forwarding to Stadion two pieces of French correspondence which had been intercepted. These missives - written by Maret to Caulaincourt - were, in the tone of instruction, decidedly peaceful. Metternich had not shown them to the other Allied ministers, and cautioned Stadion against revealing their contents to his colleagues at Chatillon. Austria had good reason to fear that some of her fellows in the coalition would be less anxious for peace if privy to the fact that the enemy hopefully contemplated the end of hostilities. Metternich suggested that Stadion speak privately to Caulaincourt and assure him that the making of peace would not be difficult.⁸³

At midnight on the 11th, the Powers signed instructions for an ultimatum to Caulaincourt; demanding that he accept, reject, or offer a counter-project.⁸⁴ This was communicated to the French minister on the 13th, after an unsatisfactory conference.⁸⁵ Caulaincourt offered a counter project which did not approach the Allied terms.⁸⁶ New instructions were written on the 14th, and approved on the 17th. Negotiations were formally broken off on the 19th. Metternich was quite willing to see the end of the "congress" for, as he wrote Schwarzenberg, he saw peace nearer without these negotiations than with them. He hoped to arrange through Caulaincourt at headquarters what could not be made in a general meeting. Everything, he said, depended on the military action. "If that goes well, all will.... I do not always regard 'the well' as a battle but always as a military attitude."⁸⁷

Still clinging to the idea of peace, he addressed several letters to Caulaincourt on March 18, the eve of the rupture at

Chatillon. He assured the French minister that the end of the negotiation would perhaps facilitate matters. Austria, he declared would always be interested in the well-being of France. "It still depends, on your master, as to whether peace is to be made; very shortly, perhaps it will no longer be in his power... I will do all I can to retain Lord Castlereagh a few days. If this minister is once allowed to depart, there will be no more question of peace." ⁸⁸

Coincident with the events at Chatillon during the first three weeks of March, came important developments at Allied headquarters. Castlereagh, after many months of waiting, at last realized his hope for a general alliance treaty between the Allies. Such a treaty was agreed to on March 4, and signed five days later. ⁸⁹ The provisions were essentially those of the preliminary treaty offered to France. Decisions on Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Spain and Holland, were confirmed, although the boundaries of the latter country were left open to discussion. In Belgium, the native desire to return to the rule of Austria, was placated in a degree by giving that country an Austrian military governor for the time being. The Austrian officials were to act as mediators in gaining the consent of the Belgians to being placed under the House of Orange.

Most of these provisions were outlined in secret articles. Spain, Portugal, Sweden and Holland were invited to accede to the Treaty. The Allies bound themselves to keep forces on foot at least a year after peace had been concluded. An alliance of twenty years duration was to serve as the guarantee of peace. ⁹⁰ Castlereagh had at last consummated the efforts of all the British diplomats since Wolsey. An imposing barrier had been erected around the empire-seeking

and glory-thirsting nation which had been troubling the minds of good Englishmen for some hundreds of years.

Metternich was struggling on as usual, in an attempt to moderate the aims of the Allies, and bring Europe to a stable equilibrium rather than to establish an armed camp around the frontiers of France. At times he grew weary of the task. He wrote to Hudelist at Vienna, ".....in a period like the present in which so many elements are acting for the ferment of minds, the reasonable and temperate man is exposed to all storms, none of his flanks is immune, and like the sailor on the sea he must rely alone on his own good fortune and principles."⁹¹

A typical example of the demands made upon his temper, may be seen in the quarrel which broke out at headquarters over the Austrian war orders, just at the time when negotiations were drawing to an end at Chatillon. Diebitsch, a Russian, had been sent to Schwarzenberg to make some inquiries on the military situation. He returned on March 18.⁹² That evening, at midnight, Alexander came to question Metternich; demanding to know whether or not Schwarzenberg had been forbidden in the past to fight, or forbidden to enter an engagement now. Metternich answered with some sharpness. "On that," said Metternich describing the scene, "the King of Prussia and all the ministers in the world shouted treason, with one voice; that Blücher was to be let perish; that it was clear that we were in accord with France; that we remained on the Rhine, when Blücher seemed to have the advantage of the enemy, etc."⁹³

Metternich awakened the Emperor Francis; and it was finally agreed that the Austrian minister should write a letter to the

commander-in-chief which should clear up the misunderstanding. The Emperor was furious over the proceeding, as was Prince Schwarzenberg when he received the letter from Metternich, together with missives from Alexander and Hardenberg. Alexander's declaration that the Allies were unanimous in the resolution "to completely untie his hands" was fiercely resented by blunt general. He replied abruptly that his hands had never been tied, and that if his actions were not agreeable, the fault lay with himself and his principles, and nowhere else.⁹⁴

"They are all crazy," wrote Metternich to Stadion, "all ready to be mettre aux plus petites maisons. We are always placed in the light of wishing to sell Monarchy, as if we had great interest in being defeated, devoured; as if Austria loved foreign slavery; as if, in a word, we were imbeciles. I believe that we alone are not out of our heads. Perhaps, we are; for a symptom of madness is to believe oneself sane."⁹⁵

With all the irritation of these petty encounters, Metternich was forced during these weeks to grapple with a very serious problem—namely, that of the government of France. A thorough treatment of the Austrian attitude has been postponed until this point in the narrative, because it was at this time that a definite decision was forced upon Metternich. The Austrian minister had looked upon the Napoleonic government as the best for stability and equilibrium in Europe. His viewpoint is well presented in letter from Gentz to Karadja, of April 11, 1814. "M. de Metternich was convinced, in his wisdom, that the reestablishment of the Bourbons would serve better the particular interest of Russia and England, than the interest of Austria and Europe in general; that France, exhausted already almost

to the point of extinction by all she has suffered for twenty years, would fall back under the feeble scepter of the Bourbon princes into a state of impotence and complete nullity; rendering her incapable of forming a counter-poise in the balance of powers; that consequently Russia, bloated by her successes, by her glory, by the ascendancy obtained in Germany, closely and henceforth invariably united with England, having no longer anything to fear from Sweden, little annoyed by Prussia, at least for some years - would have a vast open field for her ambitious enterprises, would menace anew the Porte, hold Austria in perpetual anxiety, and arrive finally at a preponderance truly alarming for her neighbors and for the rest of Europe."

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This is a clear exposition of the policy which guided Metternich's actions. All his efforts to make a stable peace, beginning with the last months of 1812, had included the contention that France must remain strong and independent in Europe. He had assured St. Aignan in November that the Allies did not intend a change of dynasty, and he labored strenuously to hold them to that time. He repeated the declaration whenever the chance was offered, and urged Schwarzenberg late in January to state it vigorously to the deputation of Bourbon supporters which had visited the commander-in-chief in the field.

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At Langres and at Troyes, as has been seen, he vigorously resisted Alexander's efforts to supply candidates for the French throne. Essentially the moderator, the course of his arguments may be roughly traced as follows: he favored the retention of the Napoleonic government; when the Czar began to talk of Bernadotte, he reiterated his opinion that choice must be left to the nation,

but declared that if the Allies were to support any new government, it should be of the Bourbons; when Alexander began to favor the Duke de Berry, having in mind a marriage with a Russian princess, Metternich insisted that if the Bourbons were to be restored the rightful heir should alone be tolerated. In none of these cases did he place himself on the side of an overthrow of the existing government. His argument on the point in question was always in the name of order and stability. It has been said above, that he even feared that the downfall of Napoleon would rekindle the fires of anarchy and revolution. This anxiety was shared by others, especially by citizens of France.⁹⁸ New conflagrations in war-torn Europe would postpone indefinitely the establishment of general equilibrium.

As a matter of fact, Metternich was inclined to give little countenance to the idea of a Bourbon restoration. "Here and everywhere we are," he wrote from Langres in the first days of February, "is only one voice - Peace and no Napoleon, because with him peace is impossible. But who shall replace Napoleon? The opinions are divided. Some say the Bourbons. In this category belong all the Cidevants and Emigres who have already distributed among themselves in advance, all the places at court. Most people say the Regency. The common people say nothing but peace and the end to this at any price."⁹⁹ A few days later, he wrote that a Regency was scarcely to be thought of.¹⁰⁰ Therefore, during the month of February he continued to retain the strictness of his attitude upon negotiating in good faith with the Napoleonic government at Chatillon. Count Munster was frankly dissatisfied with the lack of support given to the Bourbon cause. He found the Emperor Francis, however, somewhat less moderate than his

minister. Stadion seems to have had doubts upon retaining

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Napoleon. The British ministers, Munster thought, were inclined to be over-moderate because of the coming Parliament in which explanation must be made of English moves.

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On March 10, a French emissary arrived at Chatillon to plead the cause of the Bourbons, bringing with him the first authentic sentiment of the national will in the matter of dynasty. At Paris, the intentions of the Allies were utterly unknown. "It became of the highest importance," explained Talleyrand in his Memoirs, "to know the part which the united powers would take, when the day.... came, on which they would overthrow the power of Napoleon. Would they continue to treat with him? Would another government be imposed on France, or by leaving her at liberty to choose herself, would they deliver her up to the anarchy of which it was impossible to calculate the results." 103 With this in mind, Baron de Vitrolles, "at this time a man who had very pronounced opinions on the progress of constitutional ideas," was sent to headquarters. His instructions, according to the Duke de Dalberg, limited him to declaring the danger of postponing a definite decision, and to learn the Allied sentiment on the maintenance of the Napoleonic regime.

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Whether or not this is true, the fact remains that Vitrolles argued for the cause of the Bourbons in very definite terms. All the French accounts of the restoration are exceedingly garbled, due evidently to a desire to show the Bourbons everywhere in disfavor, but brought to the throne by the matchless efforts of the author - whosoever he might be. However, it is not in point here, to write the history of the Bourbon return. The memoirs of Baron de Vitrolles

seem honest enough, though hopelessly inaccurate in places.

At Chatillon, the French envoy talked with Stadion, who sent him on to headquarters. Vitrolles found Nesselrode suspicious, Metternich, however, declared that his identity was of small matter since the Allies would speak the same language if he were an envoy of Bonaparte or Savary. Vitrolle said that France would have no peace with Bonaparte and that there could be no France without the Bourbons. Metternich was openly astonished at this, and said no such sentiment had been found in France, so far. He added that the law of nations forbade meddling in French affairs. Such an example might justify any sort of reprisal, or even threaten the existence of
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nations. Vitrolles had many conferences with the Austrian minister whom he found quite charming. Metternich disclaimed any idea of a Regency, saying that the Austrian experience in the German Empire had been lesson enough. The envoy from Paris urged Alexander, in an interview on March 17, to march straight to Paris. The Emperor said, "I leave this evening for the general quarters of Prince Schwarzenberg,
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and I promise you that this conversation shall have great results."

Castlereagh was willing to listen, but said England was "not willing to make the slightest sacrifice for the reestablishment of the ancient
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dynasty in France."

Vitrolles presented his demands to the Allied ministers in the middle of March. He asked that the Congress of Chatillon be dissolved; a declaration made that the coalition would not treat with Napoleon; that the King be explicitly recognized, and the conquered provinces given over to him. At three points in French territory, general quarters must be set up for the three princes as rallying points for

loyal forces. Subsidies were to be advanced to the Royalists.

But Metternich was still thinking of peace. "The sentiment of the people is really altogether concentrated in a longing for rest,"
 110 he wrote to Hudelist. On the 18th, as has been noted, he sent off letters to Caulaincourt. About the 22nd, in a ministerial conference, the Vitrolles demand was refused and a memorandum drawn by Metternich declining to impose the Bourbons on France. However, Monsieur was to be encouraged to take action himself, and Vitrolles was to carry the sympathy of the Allies to Paris. If the Bourbon cause was not successful, the Allies promised that an amnesty for all their
 111 supporters would be included in the Treaty of Peace.

Though Metternich was not willing to declare for the Bourbons, his attitude toward them was changing. Prussia and England abandoned Napoleon, after the rupture at Chatillon. Both openly favored the Bourbon cause, although they avoided any public endorsement out of deference for the Austrian stand. If Austria gave in on the dynasty question, Prussia would be more active in curtailing the Czar's
 112 Polish ambitions. Furthermore, the conversations with Vitrolles had convinced Metternich that a considerable party in France longed for the return of the old rulers. If Napoleon continued unfavorable to ideas of peace, and the Bourbons remounted the throne, Austria would scarcely be favored by a government which it had strenuously opposed. Perhaps in this reasoning lies the explanation for his cordiality toward Vitrolles, even when refusing his demand. One of the possible factors in the new attitude was the intercepting on March 20 of a letter from Maret to Caulaincourt. The former hinted that certain cessions of fortresses might be made, since Napoleon

after ratification "would be guided solely by military considerations." If this letter is genuine there can be little doubt of the immense effect which it would produce in Metternich's mind. Fournier accepts the letter, but Baron Ernouf declares it a forgery produced during the Congress of Vienna to excuse the Allied actions in the French campaign.
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After the conference at Bar sur Aube at which the Allies refused to declare only for the Bourbons, Vitrolles announced his intention of visiting Monsieur, before going to Paris. Metternich attempted to dissuade him from this action, but found the French envoy quite decided on the point. Metternich evidently feared that the Allies had committed themselves too far, even in the little they had said. He managed to detain Vitrolles until after the battle of Arcis sur Aube, after which the latter proceeded to Nancy where the Count d'Artois was staying. But in his detention he made the acquaintance
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of a diplomat in the Austrian service, Bombelles by name.

Castlereagh had been urging a more active communication with the Bourbons, and insisted to Metternich that an Austrian agent should be sent, "the better to satisfy Monsieur and those who are disposed to support Louis XVIII, that this with His Imperial Majesty
115
is a national and not a family question." Metternich finally consented, but was still, in the words of Lord Castlereagh; "anxious to found the cause as much as possible upon a French interest, that this should be created by the Bourbons accepting the peace which Bonaparte has rejected; and thus making themselves the immediate and only resource to which the nation can appeal....." be the harbingers of stability. On March 25, Bombelles was despatched to

Nancy with instructions "in which the Emperor of Austria's sentiments are sufficiently marked - "to quote Lord Castlereagh again. There were four conditions to Allied support of Bourbon restoration. "(1) The pledge of the king to rule constitutionally. (2) The royal sanction, explicit and without evasion, of the validity of the acquisition of national properties. (3) The sanction of the public debt. (4) The preservation of public functionaries,
116
civil as well as military."

On the same day as the departure of Bombelles, the Allies
117
issued their manifesto to the French nation. The course of the negotiation at Chatillon was reviewed in some detail. The French people could blame none but their government for prolonging the war, the coalition announced. The Allied monarchs were ready for peace. This document expressed accurately the attitude which Metternich wished to take toward France. The previous day a military conference had decided to advance to Paris, despite the misgivings of Schwarzenberg. Rising exultantly from the table at which the conclusion had been reached, Alexander pointed towards the French capitol and cried,
118
"Marchons, c'est la qu'est le salut de tous!" The armies took up the march, Alexander and King Frederick William going with them. The Emperor Francis, Metternich, Castlereagh, and Hardenberg journeyed to Dijon on the 26th.

A great royalist demonstration followed the entrance of the Austrian Emperor at Dijon, but Francis bade the people to remain
119
quietly in their homes. In this simple act, advised doubtlessly by Metternich, is mirrored the character of the Austrian policy - peace, order, stability. On the 28th, news came to Dijon of the capture of Bordeaux by Wellington and the subsequent declaration there

for the Bourbons. The ministers dined gaily in honor of the capitulation and drank the healths of the mayor of Bordeaux and
120
of the Bourbons.

Three days previous, and coincident with the Bombelles mission, Caulaincourt wrote to Metternich, "I only reached the emperor tonight. His Majesty immediately gave me his final orders for the conclusion of the peace. I hasten to inform you that I am ready to return to
121
headquarters." But the acquiescence of Napoleon came too late. On the 28th, Wessenberg, who had been taken prisoner on his journey from England, was informed by Napoleon that peace would be made on terms less than those of the boundaries of the Empire. An Austrian
122
Regency would be favored in France, he said. But when the report of that interview came to Metternich, Paris had fallen.

Events moved swiftly in the French capitol. The city was taken at dusk on the evening of the 30th. Napoleon, hurrying to the rescue, saw the fires of Mortier's vanguard, read Marmont's letter which abandoned all hope of resistance, and turned back, himself to Fontainebleau. The next morning Alexander and King Frederick William rode into the city. They proclaimed through Talleyrand that the Allies would no longer treat with Napoleon. On April 2, Bonaparte was deposed by the Senate and a provisional government was organized to deliberate on a constitution. As yet the Bourbons had not been mentioned by Alexander. Talleyrand agrees to that in his Memoirs, but he fails to add that he had not mentioned them himself, as Baron
123
Vitrolles testifies. "The Bourbons have not been named, wrote
124
Sir John Beckett to Lord Sidmouth, "except by les dames de la Halle."

On April 4, Napoleon signed a decree abdicating in favor of a Regency by the Empress. But as has been shown, Austria was resolved

against any such connection, although Talleyrand wrote in the
¹²⁵
 opposite sense in his Memoirs. Macdonald reported in his Memoirs
 the utter surprise with which the French Marshalls learned from
¹²⁶
 Schwarzenberg that Austria would oppose a Regency. Therefore,
 Napoleon's decree was refused. The desperate adventurer now thought
 of joining Eugene in Italy and winning new power by supporting the
 cause of Italian unity. This chimera faded from sight within a day.
 On April 6, Napoleon abdicated without condition.

The wisdom of the Bourbon restoration had been a meaty morsel
 for controversy. A new recapitulation is not necessary here. One
 must agree in the end with Talleyrand that the Bourbons alone could
 have brought about the withdrawal of the allied armies, insured the
 retention of the ancient fortresses; they alone "could veil, in the
 eyes of the French nation, so jealous of her military glory, the
¹²⁷
 impression of the reverses which had just befallen her flag."

One of the sharpest darts to sting the sides of the new
 government was the accusation that it had been brought back and forced
 upon France by foreign bayonets. So Count Mole declared in his
 Memoirs. "Of course it is true," he wrote, "that if Napoleon had not
 vanquished by these bayonets the Bourbons would not have returned.
 But the lie, the clumsy and patent lie, is in the words 'forced upon'.
 My evidence cannot be suspect for I was one of the younger generation,
 who had known the Bourbons only in history, and while loathing the
 crimes of which their princes had been the victims, as well as the
 revolution which had overthrown them, regarded their return as
 impossible.

"Yet I declare here, without the slightest hesitation and
 before God and my honour, that when I returned from Blois, whither I

had had to follow the Empress Marie Louise, I was absolutely astounded to observe how genuine, universal, and enthusiastic was the welcome which every class in Paris had given and was still giving
 128
 Louis XVIII and his family...."

It was only natural that the Restoration should be much libelled by the partizans of different political complexion. Metternich, who did not reach Paris until April 10, having spent the first days of the recapitulation at Dijon, was absurdly enough, credited by one historian of the Restoration with receiving a million francs from
 129
 Louis XVIII in payment for having placed him on the throne. In the Memoir of 1829, Metternich was anxious to place himself in the best light with the Bourbon dynasty and so represented Austria as always having favored the Bourbons. But good evidence tears away the tinsel from this pretence - only one of the many which Metternich seems to have been unable to resist in writing his Memoirs. As soon as he put pen to paper, the thought of the present became the policy of the past.

Despite the pretence in the Memoirs, Metternich recorded some very sound observations on the Restoration which reveal his own attitude toward the event. The republican form of government, he said, had few supporters in France; they had disappeared in consequence of the Reign of Terror and the "depravity and weakness" of the Directorate. Napoleon's government had satisfied the people but they had grown weary of wars. The restoration of the Bourbons seemed the best way to peace. "The return of the Bourbons was not longed for in the sense which the Royalists attributed to this feeling, and the Royalist party itself had much diminished during the course of five and twenty years." It was longed for by the friends of public

order and political peace - that is, by the great majority of the nation, which in all times and in all countries ever places first in calculation the true interests of the Fatherland." ¹³⁰

At Dijon, where the Austrian and English parties remained during the first days of April, the fall of Paris created a great sensation. The populace asked permission to raise the royal colors, and Francis ¹³¹ finally gave his assent. Metternich, together with Hardenberg and Castlereagh arrived at Paris on April 10. The Allied ministers conferred that very evening. The convention with Napoleon had already been arranged. Metternich and Castlereagh felt that their hands had been forced by the actions of Alexander and the King of Prussia, and they signed, albeit with reluctance. ¹³² The most dissatisfactory provision was the placing of Napoleon in Elba, near the Continent. Metternich was destined to regret his acquiescence to this hasty arrangement.

Thus Napoleon's downfall was consummated. The country had been saved from anarchy but the actions of Alexander had compromised the position which Metternich was so anxious that the Allies maintain. "I venture the belief," wrote Munster to the Prince Regent, "that, if the Ministers of England, of Austria, and of Prussia, had been present at the taking of the capitol of France, they would not have agreed to the declaration made, in the name of the Allies, by the Emperor Alexander on the 31st of March." ¹³³

The crusade to Paris had come to an end. Metternich, fighting on the defensive from the moment when the Allied troops traversed the Rhine, had failed to obtain peace without the overthrow of the French government. At Basle, at Langres, at Troyes, at Chaumont, he

had labored and fought to make a peace which seemed to him a necessary basis for stability. In this he had received aid from Castlereagh, but the English minister could not escape the fact that his government was fundamentally opposed to any Napoleonic regime. Napoleon himself, by not heeding the offers of Metternich, had foolishly thrown to the winds the sole chance for the continued existence of his rule. The many worried weeks which Metternich spent in attempting to find a solution for the problem of an entry into Paris all came to naught. When the city fell, Alexander and King Frederick William entered to take possession. When Metternich and Castlereagh arrived at Paris, the foundations of the Restoration had already been laid.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

With the downfall of Napoleon, this study must of necessity come to an end. Metternich's conception of European politics has been outlined here in some detail. In the midst of disorder, he felt the imperative necessity of new stability in Europe. By that, he did not mean reaction, or the restoration of the ancient regime. Through the year 1813 he repeatedly declared that such was not his intention. No one appreciated more than he, the sins of which the old order had been guilty. He ridiculed the Emigres and excoriated them for their foolish intrigues which kept Europe in a state of constant turmoil. He said of the new organization of France, "The return to what was called 'the old regime' was impossible, because nothing was left of it but the remembrance of the causes of its decay."¹

Metternich's idea of stability, as has been shown, was much broader than a mere crusade against France and Napoleon. He had no hatreds to appease. He was the enemy of any power which threatened to shatter the general equilibrium. In his opinion, peace could only be assured by hemming in French imperialism, checking Russian territorial ambitions, putting a halt to the militaristic tendency in Prussia, and equalizing to some degree the maritime supremacy of England. The demands that he made for Austria were more than moderate. In the year 1813, he was asking for much less than the Allied powers were willing to grant. As he told Castlereagh at Langres, in January, 1814, Austria wished to be moderate, but if

the principle of aggrandizement was adopted by the Allies, then the Emperor Francis must protect himself by asking for more than the minimum which would otherwise satisfy the demands of territorial unity and European stability.

In the last months of 1812, when the disasters of the Russian campaign had turned back the legions of Napoleon, Metternich hastened to offer good offices for peace. He did not wish to see France crushed, nor Russia over-triumphant. To England, also, he made advances in order to include a maritime balance in the new European arrangement. All ended in failure. The refusal of England to consider a mediation made one of Metternich's chief requisites to stability, impossible of attainment. He therefore turned his attention to a continental peace, with the idea that England, once isolated, would be forced to accede. By assuming the position of armed mediator of the continent, he hoped to give greater weight to the Austrian proposals. He persuaded Russia and Prussia to accept this mediation. Both of these powers were anxious to continue the war, but hoped to gain Austria to their side by agreeing to a negotiation which they were confident would prove fruitless.

Playing upon their eagerness for assistance, Metternich insisted on minima far below what the Allies were actually willing to accept. Napoleon in turn, accepted Austrian mediation, only to refuse the very moderate terms which Metternich offered him. Austria then entered the war on the side of the coalition.

Though now a party to the contest, Metternich did not relinquish the position of peacemaker. As soon as the Rhine had been gained, he insisted the peace be offered but the reluctance of England largely

blocked the effort at Frankfort. Metternich learned too, that he must abandon his hope of settling the question of maritime rights, and leave it to be decided in the next war and the next peace. Beyond the Rhine, the Austrian minister fought desperately to retain a hold on the coalition, and not allow it to go beyond the limits which he considered necessary to stability. Outwardly, he failed, but actually his influence as moderator seems to have softened the Allied intentions toward France. At Paris, during the first days of the restoration, he was largely out of the picture.

It is hoped that a study may be presented at an early date on Metternich's part in the definitive settlements of Vienna and the Second Treaty of Paris. Sufficient to say here, that his influence was entirely on the side of stability as against the special interest of the powers and attempts to punish too severely the enemies of the coalition. He agreed to the Holy Alliance, against his better judgment.

When Europe had been brought to some degree of equilibrium, the task of maintaining it lay before Metternich. He began this task in the true spirit of the conservative, of the champion of the Rule of Law; seeking, not to crush out the natural forces of the age but to maintain peace and order so that exhausted Europe might be revived. Metternich was not the opponent of liberty or social emancipation. He was the opponent of revolution, of political disorder, of bloodshed. In this, he was of the same opinion as the large part of the moderates of his day.

Nor did he fail to understand the significance of the national risings. He praised them when they were defensive, but denounced them when, as in the case of revolutionary France or

Prussia, following the downfall of Napoleon, they assumed the ambition to coerce their neighbors. Certainly, he was right. He saw the fallacy of national assertion, as it is seen today by all thinking men. Metternich's viewpoint was essentially that of Castlereagh, who has been equally reviled by the friends of liberty, but whose true place in history has been demonstrated by the scholarly studies of Professor C. K. Webster.² Metternich's conception of stability, took into account the inevitable growth of constitutional government in Europe.

The moderate view point on constitutional government, is best presented by a passage in one of Castlereagh's letters to Lord William Bentinck, whose rash actions in promising a renewed constitution and republic to Genoa did much to embarrass the Italian situation. "It is impossible," wrote the English minister, "not to perceive a great moral change coming on in Europe, and that the principles of freedom are in full operation. The danger is, that the transition may be too sudden to ripen into anything likely to make the world better or happier. We have new constitutions launched in France, Spain, Holland and Sicily. Let us see the results before we encourage farther attempts. The attempts may be made, and we must abide the consequences; but I am sure it is better to retard than accelerate the operation of this most hazardous principle which is abroad."³

In France, Metternich was favorable to a constitutional government, despite the fact that Gentz warned him that the acceptance of the constitutional principle would necessitate a change in Austria.⁴ The establishment of a constitutional government was one of the conditions of Bourbon restoration set down in the instructions

of the Austrian agent, Bombelles.⁵ Metternich wrote to Emperor Francis on April 11 that the French constitution was much like the English, "but with some sensible modifications."⁶ On the 19th, the Emperor of Austria replied to an address extended to him by the French Senate, in a short communication written by Metternich. Gentz, an ardent monarchist who despised the idea of a constitutional government, hailed the Emperor's address with joy, declaring that the absence of any mention of the Constitution indicated disapproval.⁷ The royalists of Europe never seemed to comprehend that Metternich was no worshiper of the old regime.

An examination of document shows Gentz's conception to be an absurdity. The Paris address was, in tone, typically cautious. The Austrian minister would have no occasion to comment on the internal organization of France. He could leave that safely to Alexander, who had no compunctions about meddling in anything. No hint of the doctrine of legitimacy was contained in the address. The Emperor simply announced that he had always opposed the principles of destruction; that he had given his daughter in marriage to avert further disasters to Europe; that he had failed to attain his purpose. Now a "regular and paternal" government had been established in France, which ought to insure a stable peace, he said, and all parties ought to rally around the King.⁸

Some mention has been made of the liberal tendencies of Metternich's domestic policy. The spirit of the times did not pass Austria by, altogether. However, the good character of the Austrian government seems to have engendered less discontent than was ordinarily abroad. The people of the Netherlands were much loath to leave the Empire, and petitioned Francis not to abandon them. Count

Mole complained in his Memoirs, that "Even the spirit of the age seemed to have respected her (the Austrian Empire), or rather the paternal government of her sovereign had preserved her nations from a taste for novelty and all desire for change. The King of Prussia, impelled by an irresistible force, promised his subjects representative government; the Netherlands received that form of government from their sovereign; a highly proclamation, issued by the Pope astonished the three legations; the democrats of England threatened the three kingdoms with parliamentary reforms. But Austria, the bulwark of ancient and monarchical institutions, placed her imposing aristocracy in the way of democratized Europe."⁹

This is an excellent example of the complete misunderstanding which existed as regards the Metternichian policy. Count Mole was evidently not aware that the liberal proclamation of the Pope was the result of Metternich's strong advices. When Cardinal Consalvi was pressing the claims of the Pope at the Congress of Vienna, he had many conversations with Metternich on the subject of governing the legations. The Austrian minister warned the Holy Father that a new age had come upon the world, that if he thought he could rule the estates of the Church in the fashion of other days, he was sadly mistaken. Liberal tendencies in government had come to stay, he said, and if there was any hope of keeping an orderly dominion, those tendencies must be recognized in the Papal states.¹⁰

Little demand was raised for constitutional government in the Austrian Empire; perhaps because the people were ignorant, perhaps because they were contented. Metternich was disposed naturally to believe the latter. There is an interesting passage in one of his letters to the Countess Lieven which most certainly would have

puzzled his denouncers, if they had read it. "Our country," he wrote, "or rather our countries, are the most tranquil, because they enjoy without anterior revolution, the greater part of the benefits which incontestably arise from the ashes of empires overturned by political tempests. Our people do not understand why they should enter into these movements, when, in peace, they enjoy those things which the movement has procured for others. Individual liberty is complete, the equality of all classes of society before the law is perfect, all bear the same taxes: titles exist, but there
11
are no privileges."

Here is Metternich's fundamental attitude toward the Revolution. As a product of the Enlightenment, he was thoroughly in sympathy with the social reforms of the period. As a moderate man, who felt the necessity of peace and order, and the Rule of Law, he was distrustful of political revolution and of experiment which must drench Europe with more blood. Webster's summing up of the politics of Castlereagh might stand equally well for the diplomacy of Metternich. "Peace for Europe... was the object which he felt must be secured, and to which all his efforts were directed. For this he was prepared to sacrifice much, and perhaps, more than necessary. Yet we must always remember that for the moment it was peace and not the progress of nationality or liberalism that was the first necessity
12
of Europe."

Metternich's passion for stability grew stronger as the years advanced. As the difficulties of maintaining peace multiplied, this political conception of equilibrium gradually pushed all other ideas into the background of his mind. The more radical Europe became, the

more conservative was his outlook.

But, it must be clearly understood that the generally current idea of a "Metternichian era" extending roughly from 1815 to 1848, is legend of the purest water. Metternich's actual domination in Europe had ended before the year 1815 opened. From the last months of 1812 to the first months of 1814, he was supreme. After that, necessity compelled him to unite with Castlereagh, the English minister, in order to hold the fort of stability and equilibrium against the ambitions of Russia and Prussia. Castlereagh held the balance in Europe through the Congress of Vienna, the second Peace of Paris, and the years which immediately followed. Metternich was ostensibly powerful, but the source of his strength was the understanding with England.

In the late teens of the new century, when Castlereagh, forced back by English public opinion in the shell of insularity, began to draw away from Metternich, Austrian power went with him. Metternich's fear of European disturbances was now increased fourfold. In his dilemma, he bargained with Russia whom he feared, placated Prussia whom he despised; and flattered France in whom he no longer had confidence. Thus by turnings and twistings he attempted to thwart the ambitions of those powers - in Germany to the north and west, and in Italy to the south - fearing that a new outbreak in Europe would dash Austria into the abyss from which he had raised her.

Until the middle of the century, Metternich fought the battle of conservatism. He witnessed the revolutionary movements of 1819-20 of 1830, and finally of 1848, and with them the crumbling away of

the system which he had labored to maintain. The revolution of 1848 drove the old diplomat into exile, in England the haven of the harried. He was then seventy-five years old, and had been chief minister of the Austrian Empire for thirty-nine of them. Yet the old gentleman lived to return to the scenes of his power, to pace the gardens of his old home, to visit the Rhenish highlands and look once more upon the land of his birth, then to pass quietly away in the eighty-sixth year of his life.

Today, it is evident that he had fought a losing battle from the beginning. He suffered the fate of the conservative in an age of transition. He felt this himself. As early as 1819, reading the signs, he wrote; "My life has fallen at a hateful time. I have come into the world either too early or too late. Now, I do not feel comfortable; earlier, I should have enjoyed the time; later, I should have helped to build it up again; today, I have to give my life to prop up the mouldering edifice. I should have been born in 1900, and I should have had the twentieth century before me."¹³

Thus he stood; too conservative to be a radical, too liberal to be an "ultra."

The most important period of Metternich's life, is that which falls within the limits of this study for the first step in the progress to stability was the overthrow of Napoleon. To Metternich, all subsequent experience was colorless against the background of those turbid years, when - young and strong, in the first flush of power and success - he had braved the mighty Emperor of France. He said of the Memoir of his life, "I conclude my work with the year 1815, because everything which came after that belongs to ordinary

14
 history." So it seemed to him, and so it was. That was the period of his usefulness to Europe. There can be little doubt but that Metternich outlived his usefulness, but just how long peace was necessary to Europe is difficult to decide. One thing is certain, if it had not been necessary for a time, Metternich would have not been a dominant figure.

Napoleon and Metternich; how they loom up in the popular mind as protagonists in the drama of the early nineteenth century! Hero or villain; each has been cash in the character which best suited the fancy of his auditors. Both drew to themselves the most extravagant praises and the most violent maledictions; both were hailed as defender and as destroyer of good principle among mankind.

A greater contrast between men, could scarce be imagined. Born amid the tempests of the little island of Corsica, whose name was synonymous in Europe with the struggle for liberty, Napoleon remained always a Corsican - swift, strong, vengeful, passionate, and rude. Metternich's early environment was the very antithesis of the wild beauty of Corsica; the mellow Rhineland, verdant and rich, with its long vistas of terraced vineyards; the easy indolence of court life in a petty division of the Holy Roman Empire.

The diminutive, eagle-eyed general of France, in the three-cornered hat and the long black cloak, rode to victory amid the applause of his armies and his people. On the battle field, he was the military ideal of a continent; in a drawing room he was ill at ease, and strutted like a barnyard cock, who is impatient because there is no enemy at whom he may fly. Metternich's efforts were confined to cabinets and salons, and small measure of applause greeted his accomplishments. Perhaps, it was his very person that

aided the dramatic intensity of a struggle with Napoleon.

Handsome and graceful, beloved of women, possessed of the most exquisite manners in Europe, Metternich was the social favorite of every circle in which he moved.

Both men had in common an early enthusiasm for the political doctrines of the eighteenth century enlightenment. Both outgrew that enthusiasm. Napoleon became a veritable tyrant. In accordance with his character, he spoke very liberally, but was the most illiberal of men. Metternich was little prone to boast of his liberalism, especially in a country whose ruler was not yet emancipated from the ideas of the old regime. In reality the Austrian minister was a far more liberal man than Napoleon. That the contrary is generally believed, is the fault of legend.

Napoleon was idealized, then hated; but the dramatic intensity of his downfall and the incompetence of the Bourbons served to weave a legend of his life. He was made the holy champion of liberty, a martyr to reaction. Metternich fared rather badly in comparison. A calm and reasonable person cuts a poor figure as a hero. As a villain, Metternich would have been equally unimpressive had his story not been told by a generation who worshiped the colorful leaders of revolution and national regeneration. Humanity must have its drama. If Napoleon was a hero, who then, was the black antagonist? Not Alexander, for he was the avowed champion of liberty. The most fanciful imagination could scarce make villains of George IV or King Frederick William.

But Metternich! There was a villain ready made for the occasion. Suave, cunning, holding in his hands the helm of Europe,

while he listened with bent head to the little currents of revolution that whispered constantly through the land. As the years went on, this conception grew more wide spread, it became a legend; it entered the halls of learning and sat down in the seats of the mighty. May the pages of this study offer some evidence to destroy the misconception which so generally exists concerning the policy of the great Conservative of nineteenth century Europe.

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42. Ibid., p. 362; Hardenbergs Tagebuch.
43. Ibid., p. 314.
44. Ibid., p. 362; Hardenbergs Tagebuch.
45. Ibid., p. 315
46. Ibid., p. 362; Hardenbergs Tagebuch.
47. Webster, Brit. Dip., p. 147; Castlereagh to Liverpool, 16 Feb.
48. Fournier, Chatillon, p. 297; Munster to Prince Regent, 12 Feb. The letter was dated 26 Jan. Castlereagh was provoked at the embarrassment which this communication created. He protested vigorously to Liverpool, on 18 Feb; Webster, Brit. Dip., p. 157.
49. Fournier, Chatillon, p. 110
50. Ibid., Append. III, pp. 286-8; Text.
51. Ibid., Append. III, p. 285; in French. English text in Webster, Brit. Dip., p. 155.
52. Fournier, Chatillon, p. 362; Hardenbergs Tagebuch. p. 298; Munster to Prince Regent, 14 Feb.

53. Ibid., pp. 284-5. Texts.
54. Ibid., p. 298; Munster to Prince Regent, 14 Feb.
55. Ibid., 298
56. Ibid., p. 130-2
57. Ibid., p. 298; Munster to Prince Regent.
58. Ibid., p. 288; Hardenberg to Frederick William III, 14 Feb.
59. Ibid., p. 291; Hardenberg to Fred. Wm., 14 Feb.
60. Ibid., p. 290; Metternich to Stadion, 14 Feb.
61. Ibid., p. 298; Munster to Prince Regent, 14 Feb.
62. Ibid., p. 362; Hardenberg's Tagebuch.
63. Ibid., p. 300; Munster to Prince Regent, 15 Feb.
64. Ibid., p. 293; Ancillon to Hardenberg, 15 Feb.
65. Ibid., p. 319; Metternich to Stadion, 15 Feb.
66. Ibid., p. 290; Metternich to Stadion, 14 Feb.
67. Klinkowstrom, p. 811; Schwarzenberg to Metternich, 17 Feb.
68. Fournier, Chatillon, pp. 325-6; Stadion to Metternich, 18 Feb. Webster, British Diplomacy, p. 158; Castlereagh to Metternich, 18 Feb.
69. Fournier, Chatillon, Append. V. p. 324; Metternich to Stadion, 18 Feb.
70. Ibid., p. 328; Metternich to Stadion, 26 Feb.
71. Ibid., 280-1; Metternich to Schwarzenberg.
72. Ibid., 302; Munster to Prince Regent, 23 Feb.
73. Webster, Brit. Dip. p. 160; Castlereagh to Liverpool, 26 Feb.
74. Fournier, Chatillon, p. 302
75. Webster, British Dip. p. 163; Castlereagh to Liverpool, 3 Mar.
76. Fournier, Chatillon, pp. 308-14; for details of first conferences see despatches of Stadion to Metternich, 5-8-Feb., and Humboldt to Hardenberg, 7 Feb.
77. Ibid., pp. 321-3; - Stadion to Metternich, 17 Feb.

78. Ibid., -. 327
79. Ibid., pp. 329, 331, 332; Stadion to Metternich, 2,3,6, March.
80. Ibid., p. 335; Stadion to Metternich, 9 March
81. Ibid. p. 333
82. Ibid., p. 338
83. Ibid., p. 339; Metternich to Stadion, 11 March. Text of French letters pp. 340-42
84. Ibid., p. 343
85. Ibid., p. 345. Stadion to Metternich, 13 March.
86. Ibid., pp. 350, 353, note.
87. Klinkowstrom, p. 820
88. Talleyrand, Memoirs, II, pp. 195-6. Append. IV. Vitrolles, Memoirs, I, p. 128
89. Fournier, Chatillon, p. 303; Munster to Prince Regent, 4 March.
90. Ibid., p. 304; Munster to Prince Regent, 10 March. Webster, British Diplomacy, p. 165, note. Text in D'Angeberg, I, p. 116.
91. Fournier, Chatillon, p. 263
92. Ibid., p. 366; Hardenbergs Tagebuch.
93. Klinkowstrom, p. 818; Metternich to Schwarzenberg, 13 March.
94. Ibid., p. 814; Schwarzenberg to Metternich, 13 March. p. 816; Text of Alexander's letter and Schwarzenberg's reply.
95. Fournier, Chatillon, p. 345
96. Prokesch-Osten, I, p. 70
97. Klinkowstrom, p. 804.
98. Talleyrand felt this. At Chatillon, Floret was warned by Rainival, one of the French diplomats, that a delay in peace might mean revolution in France and Europe. Cf. Fournier, Chatillon, p. 377. Floret's Journal.
99. Fournier, Chatillon, p. 254; Metternich to Hudelist, 3 Feb.

100. Ibid., 255; Metternich to Hudelist, 9 Feb., 1814.
101. Ibid., p. 312; Stadion to Metternich, 8 Feb., 1814.
102. Ibid., p. 296; Munster to Prince Regent, 2 Feb.
103. Talleyrand, Memoirs, II, p. 110.
104. Ibid., II, pp. 186-9. Memoir of Duke de Dalberg, found in Talleyrand's papers.
105. Vitrolles account is inaccurate as to dates. For example, Fournier, has pointed out, (Chatillon, p. 350, note 3) that he could not have seen Metternich at Troyes on the 11th, because Metternich was not there until the 15th. Talleyrand's account of the mission is muddled. It is plainly written from Dalberg's memoir. He quotes Metternich's stand on the Bourbon question, in words which Dalberg gives as the content of a letter from Stadion to Metternich. Little dependence may be placed upon it.
106. Vitrolles, Memoirs, I, pp. 91-8.
107. Ibid., I, p. 126
108. Ibid., I, p. 139
109. Ibid., I, p. 105
110. Fournier, Chatillon, p. 265
111. Webster, British Dip. p. 168 notes, 2, 3; Castlereagh to Liverpool; 22 March.
112. For a discussion of the reasons behind Metternich's change of attitude n.b. Fournier, Napoleon, II, p. 358
113. Ibid., II, p. 358
Ernouf, Maret, pp. 654-6
Moniteur: 1815 nos. 134, 145
114. Vitrolles, Memoirs, I, pp. 151-4.
115. Webster, Brit. Dip., 173; Castlereagh to Liverpool, 30 March
116. Ibid., p. 173, note; enclosed in Castlereagh's letter of 30 March.
117. D'Angeberg I, p. 143
118. Vitrolles, Memoirs, I, p. 167
119. Metternich, Memoirs, I, p. 239
120. Fournier, Chatillon, p. 367, Hardenbergs Tagebuch.

121. Talleyrand, *Memoirs*, II, p. 196; *Append. IV.*
122. Arneth, *Wessenberg*, I, p. 188
123. Talleyrand, *Memoirs* II, p. 116
Vitrolles, I, p. 311
124. Pellet, G., *Life and Correspondance of the R. Hon. Henry Addington, first viscount Sidmouth*; 3 vols., London, 1847. v. I, p. 116.
125. Talleyrand, *Memoirs* II, p. 116
126. Fournier, *Napoleon I*, II, p. 371, note.
127. Talleyrand, *Memoirs*, II, p. 117.
128. Mole, Louis M., *Life and Memoirs of Count Mole*; edited by Marquis de Moailles, 2 vols. Vol. II, translated by Arthur Chambers, London 1923. Vol II, p. 209.
129. Note by M. de Bacourt, editor of *Talleyrand Memoirs*, II, p. 112.
130. Metternich, *Memoirs*, I, p. 244.
131. *Ibid.*, I, p. 239.
132. *Ibid.*, pp. 240-1; II, p. 548, Metternich to Emperor Francis, 11 April.
133. Munster-Ledenberg, G.H., graf zu, furst von Derneberg, *Political Sketches of the State of Europe from 1814-67*, Edinburgh, 1868, p. 151. This volume contains Munster's despatches to the Prince Regent, 1814-15. Most letters for this period contained in Fournier, *Chatillon*, but some enlargements in both; especially good for the first peace of Paris.

Chapter VII. - Conclusion

1. Metternich, *Memoirs*, I, p. 244.
2. Webster has redeemed the diplomatic reputation of Castlereagh, but, in the opinion of this author, he has taken too much for granted the old tradition of ultra-Toryism...He has failed to point out the essential unity of moderate, practical men, whether liberal or conservative.
3. Webster, *British Diplomacy 1813-15*; p. 181. Castlereagh to Lord William Bentinck, 7 May, 1814.
4. Klinkowstrom, *Oesterreichs Theilnahme an der Befreiungskrieger*,

5. Chapter VI, note 116
6. Metternich, *Memoirs*, II, p. 551.
7. Klinkowstorm, pp. 332-5; Gentz to Caradja, 29 April, 1814
8. *Le Moniteur*, 1814; vol., I, p. 439
9. Mole, *Memoirs*, I, p. 323
10. Rinieri, R. I., *Corrispondenza Inedita dei Cardinali Consalvi e Pacca nel tempo del Congresso di Vienna (1814-5)*
pp. 633-5; Consalvi to Pacca, 20 May 1815.
pp. 733-6; Consalvi to Pacca, 12 June, 1815
11. Hanoteau, pp. 180-1; Metternich to Countess Lieven, 4 Feb., 1819.
12. Webster, *Some Aspects of Castlereagh's Foreign Policy in Transactions of Royal Historical Society*, 3rd ser. vol. III, p. 88.
13. Metternich, *Memoirs*, III, p. 394-5.
14. *Ibid.*, III, p. 338.